The Pastoral Epistles of Paul

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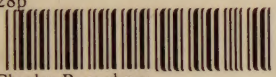

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THE PASTORAL EPISTLES OF PAUL

COMMENTARIES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT
BY CHARLES R. ERDMAN

The Gospel of Matthew
The Gospel of Mark
The Gospel of Luke
The Gospel of John
The Acts
The Epistle of Paul to the Romans
The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians
The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians
The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians
The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians
The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians
The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon
The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians
The Pastoral Epistles of Paul
The Epistle to the Hebrews
The General Epistles
The Revelation of John

AN EXPOSITION

The Pastoral Epistles of Paul

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Princeton Theological Seminary
Princeton, New Jersey

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the greater glory
of the
Chief Shepherd

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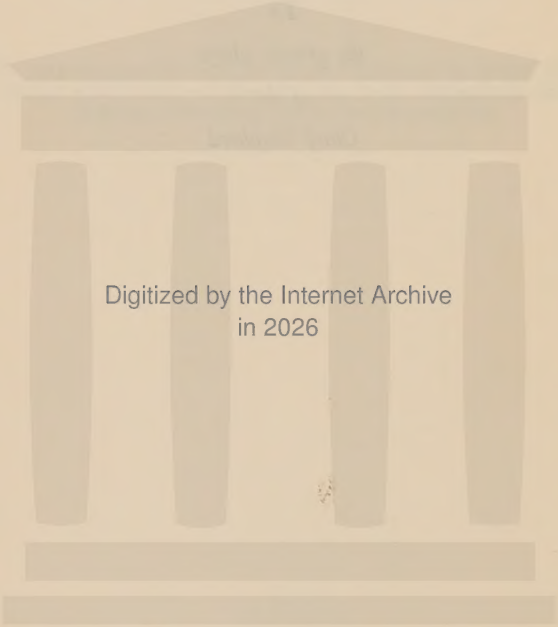

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FOREWORD

The vital interest of these vigorous little letters is confined to no one class of readers. Their first appeal is to Christian pastors, particularly to such as are serving in foreign fields, for they were written to missionaries in charge of infant churches in lands only partly evangelized; to such they offer indispensable instruction for daily duties, and constitute an inspired handbook of pastoral care. They are likewise invaluable, however, to all persons who wish to know the essential faith and order of the Christian Church; and their supreme appeal is to such as seek enlargement of life, and success in service. They bring us into the living presence of heroes whose words and deeds have become an ennobling influence in every part of the world. They cannot be read without arousing a new desire to "fight the good fight of the faith," to be "rich in good works," to "lay hold on the life which is life indeed."

INTRODUCTION

The New Testament letters which bear the names of Timothy and of Titus have been styled, for at least a century, "The Pastoral Epistles." This title distinguishes them from letters like James and First John, which were written to Christians in general, from others like Philippians and Colossians, which were addressed to certain churches, or from strictly personal communications such as Philemon.

These letters were directed to men who were in charge of Christian congregations; they contain many personal elements, yet they are essentially of an official character and designed to guide pastors in their care of churches. They are, therefore, properly called "The Pastoral Epistles," both because of their content and by way of eminence, for there exist elsewhere no comparable guides in pastoral service.

That these letters were written by Paul, in the last years of his life, need not be doubted. It is true that in recent years, for the first time, this authorship has been questioned. One reason assigned has been the difficulty of finding a place for the writing of these letters in the life of the apostle as it is recorded in The Acts. To find such a place is more than difficult; it is impossible; for the historic and personal references contained in these letters show that they must have been composed in a period subsequent to that treated by Luke. It will be remembered that his narrative closes with mention of an imprisonment of two years' duration suffered by Paul in Rome. The Pastoral Epistles seem to show that the great apostle subsequently was released, as he had expected, and as his Roman judges admitted he deserved; and that he continued his travels and his care of the churches. Any other view is a mere supposition with little, if any, support.

The exact order of events cannot be determined definitely; but it appears that in resuming his missionary jour-

neys Paul realized his expressed purpose of revisiting the churches in Asia Minor, possibly even of journeying westward to Spain; that he went to Crete, where he left Titus to care for the infant church, that on his way to Macedonia he commissioned Timothy to take charge of the Christian community in Ephesus, that on his journey to Nicopolis he wrote the instructions contained in the First Epistle to Timothy and in the Epistle to Titus, that he was subsequently arrested and wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy from his dungeon in Rome, where, soon after, he suffered the martyrdom which this last letter plainly foretold.

As the title and occasion of these Pastoral Epistles clearly indicate, their substance consists chiefly in directions to ministers relative to the organization and doctrine and life of the Christian Church. These three themes are more or less prominent in all of these letters; yet a different subject appears to be emphasized specifically in each of the three epistles, and in this exact order: in First Timothy, Church organization holds the chief place; Second Timothy lays the stress upon sound doctrine; Titus dwells upon the promotion of consistent Christian life. This order is logical; it forms a climax; it bears a message. Church government is not an end in itself; it is of value only as it secures sound doctrine; and doctrine is of value only as it issues in life.

The form of Church government outlined in the Pastoral Epistles is not described in detail; nor does its exact counterpart seem to exist in any modern form of ecclesiastical polity, whether Episcopal or Presbyterian or Congregational. Probably the nearest approach to it is found to-day in certain mission fields where considerable elasticity and liberty are allowed temporarily in adapting an accepted form or organization to the needs of infant churches.

The main features of the system, however, are clearly marked. Evidently the chief place was held by inspired apostles who had been appointed by Christ and who were the official witnesses of his resurrection.

Timothy and Titus appear to have served as delegates

of the Apostle Paul, and as commissioned to represent him in the accomplishment of definite and temporary tasks. They were not apostles, but rather pastors and spiritual leaders, and their activities did not seem to interfere with the self-government of the Christians among whom they sojourned.

In each local church the duties of oversight and of teaching devolved upon a group of officers variously designated as "elders" or "presbyters" or "bishops" or "overseers." All of these were on a perfect equality, and the amount of their salary was proportioned to their fidelity and service. As to their choice and ordination and discipline, special instructions were given by Paul.

There existed also a secondary ministry, namely that of the "deacon," possibly also of the "deaconess"; but the exact functions of these officers are not made clear, although it is commonly supposed that they were entrusted with the care of the poor and with the temporal affairs of the Church.

The high personal qualifications requisite for both these latter offices of "elder" and "deacon" are strongly emphasized by pointing out the grave responsibility of the Christian Church as the appointed guardian of the sacred deposit of revealed truth.

Thus in the Pastoral Epistles the maintenance of sound doctrine is ever regarded as the chief purpose of Church government. This doctrine appears to have been endangered by prevalent forms of false teaching. The exact character of these heresies cannot be determined. Evidently they were Jewish in their origin, and consisted largely in vain speculations upon Old Testament law and history, in fruitless discussions of casuistry, and in Hebrew myths and rabbinical legends.

Many readers believe that these false teachings included certain elements of Oriental philosophy and mysticism which developed into the Gnostic theories of the second century. These theories taught that matter is essentially evil; therefore, the world could not have been created by God but was brought into being by one in a long series of

spirits or æons which emanated from him; a place among these emanations was assigned to Christ, and a reference to the series is supposed to be found in "the endless genealogies" of which Paul speaks in these Epistles. These theories taught further that as matter was evil, there was no wrong in either the abuse or the indulgence of the body.

Now it is true that the errors which Timothy and Titus were to combat do include both false asceticism and lawlessness; it is further true that they may have had heathen elements; yet their essential nature seems to have been largely that of allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament Scriptures and speculation upon the requirements of Jewish law.

Beyond all question the real peril in these teachings lay in their lack of any practical moral purpose and in their definite tendency to result either in bodily austerity or in license. Such teachings Timothy and Titus were to oppose by sound doctrine which would secure sane and holy living.

The supreme interest of the Pastoral Epistles, therefore, is moral, ethical, practical. Their great purpose is to produce purity, godliness, holiness, service, love. The errors they combat recur in every age. There is always danger that religion may degenerate into mere idle speculation, into the vapors of theological and philosophical debate, or on the other hand, into a set of external, arbitrary rules and laws of conduct.

Real religion is a matter of motive, of conviction, of determination, and of belief, and it cannot fail to express itself in kindly words and in worthy deeds. An intelligent acceptance of the great Christian verities will inevitably transform character and mold conduct. True faith in a living Christ will surely issue in a life of worship and service and love.

Herein, then, is the abiding value of the Pastoral Epistles, namely, in their insistence upon consistent Christian living, in their inspiration to holiness, in their guidance toward God.

It is true that they possess unique interest for all who are concerned in the vexed problems of church organization.

Aside from the teaching of these little letters, those problems can never be solved. They are the inspired manual for the order of the Christian Church.

It is also true that it is easy to underrate their importance in matters of Christian faith. They contain great classic passages which like precious gems flash forth the radiance of revealed truth.

However, their supreme glory lies in the fact that they continually remind us that truth is in order to godliness, that "the grace of God hath appeared bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works."

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

It is distinction and honor enough for Timothy that he enjoyed the friendship and won the affection of the Apostle Paul. The character of the great apostle rises above the mists of the receding centuries in ever-increasing glory and grandeur, and only a man of unusual qualities would have been granted the privilege of being his chosen companion and the recipient of his love.

The acquaintance between them was formed when Paul, on his first missionary journey, visited Lystra where Timothy was living. This city lay on the great Roman road between Antioch and Derbe in what is now known as southern Asia Minor. It was a Roman colony. The exact race to which its population belonged is not definitely known. The father of Timothy, however, is called "a Greek," and it is therefore probable that Timothy enjoyed the culture which this term implies. What is more certain and more important, he was brought up under strong religious influences; his mother, Eunice, like his grandmother Lois, was a devout Jewess, and Timothy from his earliest years was instructed carefully in the Holy Scriptures.

It was during the impressionable days of Timothy's boyhood that Paul made that memorable visit to Lystra when the populace first wished to worship the apostle and later sought to take his life. Timothy seems to have listened with eagerness to the good news preached by Paul. He saw him heal a helpless cripple, heard him appeal to the great crowds, looked on in horror when he was stoned and left as dead, and in wonder when he rose and reëntered the city. The next day the apostle started on his journey; and in the company of earnest converts whom he left behind him in Lystra were Eunice and her son Timothy.

On his second missionary journey Paul revisited Lystra and chose Timothy as a companion in travel. This choice was determined in part by the high esteem in which the

young disciple was held by the Christians both of Lystra and of Iconium, and further by certain prophetic utterances which intimated the fitness of Timothy for his task. Accordingly, to avoid the prejudice of Jews among whom he might labor, Timothy submitted to the rite of circumcision, and then was ordained by the presbytery, or local council of elders, and in this solemn service Paul himself took part. Henceforth, until the death of the apostle, Timothy was his associate, his helper, his loyal friend.

Together they crossed from Asia to Europe, carrying the gospel message. Together they visited Philippi and Thessalonica and Berea. For a time Timothy was left behind, but he rejoined Paul at Athens, from which city he carried back a message to the Thessalonians and again met Paul at Corinth. Subsequently they traveled eastward together to complete the missionary journey at Jerusalem and Antioch.

Again on his third great evangelistic tour Paul was accompanied by Timothy and with him spent more than two years in Ephesus. During this time Timothy was sent on a difficult mission to Corinth. Later, on his return, he visited Greece with Paul and was one of the company who went with him on his last journey to Jerusalem, where the apostle was arrested.

During the years of imprisonment Timothy was found with Paul in Rome, and after the release of the apostle he journeyed with him to Asia and was left in charge of the church at Ephesus. Not long after, he received from Paul this First Epistle, which was designed to guide and assist him in his work. Some time later he received the Second Epistle, the content of which shows that Paul had been imprisoned again, that he was soon to be executed, and that he longed for the companionship and comfort of the young friend whom in this his last letter he summoned to his side.

That mission to the Ephesian church was the most difficult task to which Timothy ever had been appointed. The city was one of the most important capitals of the ancient world; through it surged great tides of travel and of commerce; in it were found influential representatives of all the schools of Greek and Oriental philosophy, as well

as all forms of pagan religion. In particular, it was the seat of worship of the great goddess Diana whose temple, just outside the city, attracted vast multitudes of pilgrims, and brought to the city both fame and wealth. In addition to these heathen influences, the Ephesian Christians were subjected to strong currents of Jewish thought and teaching.

That Timothy, after long years of acquaintance with Paul, was accounted capable of filling such a difficult post, is an eloquent testimony to his ability and his worth. It is evident that Timothy was timid and retiring, but this disposition was due in large measure to his youth and to his lack of physical strength. It is a mistake to argue from the serious exhortations found in Paul's Epistles that Timothy was lacking in vigor, in moral courage, or in spiritual power. The deep affection felt for him by the apostle and expressed repeatedly in these letters must argue for a character of peculiar beauty and depth and charm.

Nevertheless, the work to which Timothy had been assigned was full of serious problems, and while Paul did not hesitate to entrust him with the task, he did feel it wise to write to him this letter of instruction which not only served for the guidance of Timothy but has also been a handbook for Christian pastors in all succeeding years. It was necessary for Timothy to rebuke false teachers, to direct the public worship, to aid in the choice of church officers, to deal wisely with many different classes in the Christian community, and to lead a life which would be an example and an inspiration to all the flock.

The letter contains, first, directions intended for the entire church, and then such as applied more directly to Timothy himself. These injunctions are full of meaning and of easy application to pastors and people of the present day. The letter is so far informal as to admit no very exact analysis. It is possible, however, that the following outline may be of service to readers as indicating the general contents of the epistle:

I. Introductory. I Tim. 1: 1-20.
  A. The Salutation. Ch. 1: 1, 2.
  B. The Charge Concerning Doctrine. Ch. 1: 3-20.
    1. The Law and the Gospel. Ch. 1: 3-11.

2. The Thanksgiving of Paul. Ch. 1: 12-17.
3. The Encouragement and Warning. Ch. 1: 18-20.
II. General Instruction for the Church. Chs. 2: 1 to 3: 16.
A. Public Worship. Ch. 2.
1. The Scope of Public Prayer. Ch. 2: 1-7.
2. The Demeanor of Men and Women. Ch. 2: 8-15.
B. The Qualifications of Officers. Ch. 3.
1. Bishops. Ch. 3: 1-7.
2. Deacons. Ch. 3: 8-13.
3. The Importance of the Church. Ch. 3: 14-16.
III. Advice to Timothy. Chs. 4: 1 to 6: 2
A. Personal Life and Duties. Ch. 4.
1. Warning Against False Doctrine. Ch. 4: 1-5.
2. Exhortation to Godly Living. Ch. 4: 6-10.
3. Encouragement to Faithful Service. Ch. 4: 11-16.
B. Pastoral Oversight. Chs. 5: 1 to 6: 2.
1. The Old and the Young. Ch. 5: 1, 2
2. Widows. Ch. 5: 3-16.
3. Elders. Ch. 5: 17-25
4. Slaves. Ch. 6: 1, 2.
IV. Conclusion. Ch. 6: 3-21.
A. False Teachers Denounced for Vanity and Avarice. Ch. 6: 3-10.
B. Timothy Solemnly Exhorted. Ch. 6: 11-16.
C. Postscript. Ch. 6: 17-21.
1. An Admonition to the Rich. Ch. 6: 17-19
2. Final Charge to Timothy. Ch. 6: 20, 21a.
3. Benediction. Ch. 6: 21b.

I. Introductory I Timothy 1: 1-20

A. THE SALUTATION Ch. 1: 1, 2

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus our hope; 2 unto Timothy, my true child in faith: Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

The first question which seriously concerns a Christian pastor is that of his call to the sacred office. Mistaken notions of this call are responsible for keeping many worthy men out of the ministry, as well as for alluring some to attempt its tasks who are unqualified and who could serve God more effectively in other spheres.

This call consists in a conviction wrought in the heart of a man by the Spirit of God that it is his duty and privilege to devote himself to the preaching of the gospel and to the care of souls. This conviction is usually produced by natural means and can be vindicated on reasonable grounds. In its essence it does not differ from the experience of any follower of Christ who, however humble and obscure his task, if wholly submissive to the will of his Master, may have the comfort and peace of believing that he is in the place appointed him by the Lord.

Paul had no doubt as to his call. He believed that it came to him directly from God; it had been voiced by Ananias in the hour of his conversion; it had been confirmed by the church at Antioch when he was ordained to his life work; and now on his last missionary journey as he writes to Timothy, he declares himself to be "an apostle of Christ Jesus" in obedience to "the commandment of God."

The very word "apostle" used by Paul to describe his office embodies the idea of divine vocation, for it means "one who has been sent." It applies specifically to that little group of men who were appointed by Christ in person and who were given supernatural endowments as witnesses of his resurrection and as the founders of his Church.

This term thus used by Paul in the opening sentences of the epistle sounds out a note of authority, and intimates that he is writing not a merely personal letter, but is sending a message to the pastor and through him to the members of the Ephesian church. Thus it became of priceless value for the guidance not only of that congregation, but for every church of Christ through the following years.

Paul calls himself "an apostle of Christ Jesus," not of "Jesus Christ." This is according to his usual custom. While both phrases denote the same Lord, the former fixes the thought upon the glorified divine Being who had been known among men as "Jesus"; the latter makes more prominent the human aspect of the One who had become "the Christ." This was natural for Paul who had not companied with the Master in the days of his flesh, who after his conversion always regarded Christ as his ascended and glorified Lord.

As Paul speaks of his divine call, he employs two phrases not found previously in his epistles. He describes God as "our Saviour," and Jesus Christ as "our hope." These are beautiful expressions: one pointing backward to a great redeeming work; one looking forward to the fulfillment of glorious promises. In the Old Testament, God is represented as a "Saviour," but the salvation secured by him is usually that of deliverance from physical peril; but here the fuller meaning is intended, as one who has set us free from the guilt and power of sin. Christ is called elsewhere "our peace" and "our life;" here he is represented as the ground and object of that confident expectation of glory which is to be ours when finally we are delivered from the very presence of sin and of all its consequences, when Christ himself again shall appear.

While Paul describes himself here with this note of authority, as he turns to address Timothy, he employs a tone of true tenderness: "Unto Timothy, my true child in faith." He thus refers to the fact that years ago, when he was on his First Missionary Journey, his preaching had resulted in the rebirth of Timothy, so that the latter was in reality his spiritual child, and to the further facts that on

his Second Missionary Journey Timothy had become his companion and during all the long years had rendered service to him "like a son to a father;" and now, as for a time they have been separated from each other, Paul sends this tender greeting to one he truly loves.

Upon Timothy he invokes "grace, mercy, peace." There is something peculiar in this petition. In all previous letters his salutations have included "grace and peace"; never before has Paul added the word "mercy." "Grace" denotes the divine favor in its fullest form; it is the source of all spiritual life and enjoyment. "Peace" is the experience of a soul in harmony with God, which knows that tranquillity and blessedness God alone can give. "Mercy," however, turns the thoughts specially upon the ill desert of the recipient and upon the compassion of God. It is just possible that it was used by the apostle as a delicate suggestion to the young pastor of his continual need of humility.

Surely it is a message to all modern ministers. It reminds them that while God will grant all needed grace and while they can expect to enjoy a peace which passes all understanding, still in their most sacred offices they will fall so far short of perfection and of the requirements of their spiritual tasks that they continually will need to cast themselves upon the mercy of God.

The close relation in which Paul here unites Christ Jesus with "God the Father" as the source of these blessings, as well as the previous phrases in this salutation, where "Christ Jesus our hope" is united with "God our Saviour" in the appointment of Paul to his service, indicates almost beyond question that, to the mind of the apostle, Christ Jesus is no less than divine.

This divine Saviour he calls "our Lord." Only those who really submit their wills to Christ as Master and Lord will know what it is to find in him their "hope" and to receive from him "grace, mercy, peace."

B. THE CHARGE CONCERNING DOCTRINE, Ch. 1: 3-11.

1. The Law and the Gospel. Ch. 1: 3-11

3 As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, 4 neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith; *so do I now.* 5 But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: 6 from which things some having swerved have turned aside unto vain talking; 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm. 8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully, 9 as knowing this, that law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for menstealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine; 11 according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

The second great question which concerns a minister of Christ is that of the message he is to proclaim. Exhortations to sound doctrine constitute the main burden of all the Pastoral Letters taken as a whole, and the introductory chapter of this First Epistle to Timothy has this as its chief theme.

In its form, however, this chapter is a reminder to Timothy of the charge given to him by the apostle when the church at Ephesus was entrusted to his pastoral care. This charge was to proclaim the pure gospel, vs. 3-11, as Paul himself rejoiced to do, vs. 12-17, and to which service Timothy had been ordained, vs. 18-20.

To the mind of Paul there was no uncertainty as to the content of the Christian message. He designates it here as "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God," v. 11; he

summarizes it in the familiar saying, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," v. 15. He declares its supreme end to be "love" for God and men. V. 5.

He therefore begins the letter by recalling to Timothy the fact that he had been left in Ephesus for the very purpose of restraining certain men who were teaching "a different doctrine" and not the divine message delivered by Paul. This new teaching was described as heterodoxy, "another teaching," that is, divergent from the message of the apostle, which he himself considered to be an inspired standard and norm of truth.

This false teaching, however, did not consist so much in such a denial of essential truths as we commonly designate "heresy," but rather in an attempt to add to the gospel certain fruitless speculations upon the Jewish law, which Paul defines as mere "fables" and "endless genealogies." By these terms he does not refer to the stories of the Old Testament, but to the rabbinical subtleties and the allegorical interpretations connected with the Hebrew Scriptures, and particularly with their "pedigrees," which resulted only in controversy and not in what Paul describes as the discharge of a stewardship entrusted by God in the sphere of Christian faith. Paul seems to intimate that religious teachers to whom has been committed the divine message should make available to others those blessings of God which accompany Christian faith. The true purpose of such teachers should be to secure, not the dissension and bitterness which issue from the fruitless discussion of subtle mysteries, but rather "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned."

Paul reminds Timothy that certain leaders in the Ephesian church had been indifferent to these moral qualities, and had "turned aside unto vain talking," desiring to be known as "teachers of the law," although, indeed, they understood neither the force of their own assertions nor the real nature of the themes they debated. Paul does not deny that the law is admirable when used in accordance with its right meaning and intention, and when one remembers that it was "not made for a righteous man" who fulfills the will of God in free obedience, but that it was in-

tended to rebuke and restrain those who are guilty of rebellion against God and of acts contrary to his Commandments and to that wholesome instruction contained in the gospel.

Evidently, then, Paul does not regard the message which a Christian minister is to deliver as a matter of human speculation, but rather as a divine revelation. All teaching, whether in reference to duty or doctrine, must be according to that message of which Paul says that, as a sacred treasure, it "was committed to my trust." This message may be stated in different terms; it must be given ever wider applications; but in its essence it cannot be changed. It is the good news "of the glory of the blessed God," the glad tidings of his redeeming grace in Christ Jesus.

Preaching which departs from this gospel is either unsound or unprofitable; sometimes it is both. Here the rebuke is directed against vain and futile speculations, and against certain refinements and interpretations which derived from Scripture rules of living to be accepted in place of that vital principle of love, which is in itself the fulfilling of all law.

Ministers need to be reminded that the gospel is not good advice, but good news. It is not a code of laws, nor is it merely a system of ethics, but the proclamation of the redeeming work of God, our Saviour. It is a message of the infinite grace offered in Christ who is "our hope."

There is surely a place and a time for preaching the law. It must be set forth not as a matter of idle debate, nor to arouse curious questions of casuistry, but in all its solemn grandeur as a rebuke to sinners and as a means of awakening in human hearts the conscious need of salvation.

However, the supreme end of preaching ever will be so to present the grace of God in Christ as to call forth a responsive love. Yet this love as described by Paul is no mere passing emotion. Paul never identifies religion with shallow sentiment. The love of which he speaks must have its source and its spring "in a pure heart," that is, one free from all unholy desires and evil motives; it must come from "a good conscience," that is one which has been delivered from the sense of guilt, from the consciousness of weakness

and from all unwillingness to respond to the claims of moral obligation; above all, it must have its origin in "faith unfeigned," a faith which is no empty profession, no simple, easy assent to formulas, but a vital principle uniting one to a living Christ, and manifested in a life "according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God."

2. The Thanksgiving of Paul. Ch. 1: 12-17

12 I thank him that enabled me, *even* Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to *his* service; 13 though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15 Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief: 16 howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should hereafter believe on him unto eternal life. 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

In addition to the conviction of a divine call and to the possession of a divine message, a true minister of Christ needs a personal experience of divine grace. This is the most necessary of all his qualifications. No man ever had that experience more truly or more deeply than did Paul himself. When urging Timothy to be faithful to his task, Paul turns aside to express the gratitude which he himself feels for the divine grace which has called him into the ministry and equipped him for his work in spite of his conscious unworthiness and the grievousness of his previous sin. This thanksgiving is not wholly a digression. It really enforces his charge to Timothy, for Paul so voices his gratitude as to give a true conception of the gospel which Timothy has been charged to keep pure; and as Paul expresses his own joy in being privileged to proclaim that gospel, his words cannot fail to encourage the young pastor who shares with him that privilege which is so unique.

Paul expresses his thanks to a living and divine Christ who showed such infinite grace in counting him faithful and

in appointing him to public service, even though previously he had been "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." Paul does not mean that he had blasphemed the name of God, but the name of Christ, whom he now regards as a divine Master. As a persecutor he had been guilty of surpassing cruelty; he had been "injurious," but he here describes the malice and the deadly hate which he had shown towards the followers of Christ. There had been on his part a certain demonic fierceness. He had been heartless in his treatment of women and of men. He had shut them in prison. He had compelled them to blaspheme the name they loved. As a ruler he had given his vote to have them put to death with bitter torture. In spite of all this, Christ had shown him mercy. Paul's ignorance extenuated his fault. It did not excuse it, for his unbelief had been stubborn and sinful. Nevertheless the grace of the Lord had "abounded exceedingly" toward Paul, so that there was awakened an answering faith and love toward Christ. Thus Paul found the experience which he calls "salvation," and with this in mind he quotes a notable saying, which seems to have been current among the early believers, namely, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Such a salvation as Paul had found was the very purpose and end of the incarnation, and the "saying" which Paul uses in this connection forms a comprehensive and noble summary of Christian truth. The connection of the phrases is significant. Paul is returning thanks for being entrusted with the gospel. In effect he is saying, "This is the gospel." In contrast with the false teachers and to encourage Timothy to fidelity, he sounds forth this mighty message: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

He "came into the world." This phrase speaks to us majestically of preëxistence, of Deity, of incarnation, of voluntary humility, of grace and mercy and love; for he came into the world for the sake of "sinners" and to solve for them the supreme problem of the world. He came "to save sinners." Therefore, salvation refers chiefly to sin, and sin finds its essence in the selfishness of the human soul. Christ came to bring salvation from the guilt and power

and ultimately from the presence of sin. He came to bring men to a life of service and of holiness and of fellowship with God.

This salvation can be expressed, as Paul further declares, by faith and love, and these will be preceded by true repentance; for Paul immediately refers to himself as the chief of sinners. As he recalls his life of cruelty and hatred and ignorant unbelief, he regards himself as truly unworthy of the salvation which has been granted to him, still more of the high service to which he has been called as a minister of Christ. He states, however, the special reason which Christ had in showing him such abounding grace. It was that Paul might serve as a supreme example of one who had been saved by grace. It was to give encouragement to all other men that, in view of the "longsuffering" of Christ shown toward Paul, they might expect similar mercy to be granted to them, no matter how grievous their sin. Paul declares that to them, if only they believe, will be granted "eternal life," by which phrase he does not mean to indicate mere continuance of existence, but a kind and quality of life, a life of moral excellence and of blessed fellowship with God through Jesus Christ.

No wonder that Paul breaks out in a doxology of praise, "unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God." To him he ascribes "honor and glory for ever and ever."

Probably no truer preparation can come to a minister of Christ than that of realizing his own absolute unworthiness and of believing that it is the infinite mercy of his Lord which has called him from sin to holiness and from the service of self to the ministry of the gospel. When one appreciates this infinite grace, he knows something of the exultation and the joy voiced by the apostle, and he is encouraged, as Timothy must have been when he read these words, to share with Paul the blessed experience of proclaiming the message of divine grace.

3. The Encouragement and Warning. Ch. 1: 18-20

18 This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; 19 holding faith

and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: 20 of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme.

Even when convinced of a call to the ministry, instructed in the gospel message, and conscious of a personal experience of divine grace, one is not justified in assuming the sacred duties of a Christian pastor unless he has received the public sanction of the Church. Paul ever regarded the organized society of believers as a divine institution, and he defended its right to determine who could be enrolled as its members and who could serve as its officers.

Thus when further enforcing his charge to Timothy and urging him to guard the purity of the gospel, he reminds him of the inspired predictions uttered at the time when Timothy was ordained and encourages him in accordance with these prophecies to "war the good warfare" as a soldier of Christ, "holding faith and a good conscience."

Paul seems to indicate that ordination, as received by Timothy at the hands of the presbytery, is an appointment to office in recognition of appropriate gifts. Often a Christian minister has been in the position of the young pastor in charge of the church at Ephesus. In times of discouragement, in the face of crushing obligations, when fearful of failure and defeat, he has recalled the scene in which he was set apart for his sacred task by the representatives of the Church. He has remembered the favorable testimonies to his ability and promise which were presented by those who had investigated his qualifications for the high task to which he was being appointed, and his heart has been strengthened. Girded about as with armor by those predictions of usefulness and by those cherished expressions of confidence, he has gone forth with new courage to serve faithfully as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, Timothy is warned of the peril which attends false teaching and is assured that as the Church has a right to determine what men it may properly ordain, so, too, at times it is obliged to exclude from its ministry and

even from its membership those who are corrupting its pure doctrine.

Paul refers to Hymenæus and Alexander. The latter is difficult to identify; but Hymenæus is probably the same person who is mentioned in a later letter as one who was denying a bodily resurrection, on the ground, probably, that for a believer, resurrection, in a spiritual sense, has taken place already. Whatever the exact nature of their dangerous doctrine, Paul traces the cause of their defection from the faith to a previous lapse in morals. They had thrust away from themselves "a good conscience," and consequently had "made shipwreck concerning the faith." It is pitifully true, that to those who are guilty of moral weakness and failure, things divine become less and less real, and finally when one is blinded by sin, he no longer sees with the eyes of faith the realities of the gospel.

In reference to these offenders, Paul declares that they have been "delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme." It is probable that by this expression "delivered unto Satan," Paul means more than excommunication. It surely means that; but it is also possible that, in the early days of the Church, as with the imposition of apostolic hands miraculous powers were conferred, so excommunication from the Church in some cases may have been followed by bodily suffering. However, when a person was thus "remanded to Satan for punishment," it was with a view to his reformation and restoration to Christian fellowship. Paul hopes that these men will learn by their experience not to desecrate sacred things, nor to use their influence in undermining the faith of believers.

These solemn words both of encouragement and of warning must impress upon all readers the sanctity of the Christian Church. They cannot fail to remind us of the solemn responsibilities which rest upon its ordained officers, and also of the holy privileges which result from its fellowship and its communion, and of the duty which rests upon all to maintain its ordinances and to guard carefully its sacred deposit of revealed truth.

II. General Instruction for the Church. Chs. 2:1 to 3:16

A. PUBLIC WORSHIP. Ch. 2

1. The Scope of Public Prayer. Ch. 2:1-7

I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; 2 for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, *himself* man, Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony *to be borne* in its own times; 7 whereunto I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

When one has been called to the ministry, when he has been instructed in Christian truth, when he has had an experience of divine grace, and when, finally, he has been ordained by the action of the Church, the first great task which confronts him is that of conducting public worship. It is a supremely difficult task. It demands tact and wisdom and discipline, and it taxes all the powers of the mind and heart. Upon its rightful discharge depends in large measure the spiritual life and development of Christian congregations and the value of their appointed services.

Thus after his introductory chapter, when Paul comes to the very substance of his letter and gives to the young pastor instructions intended for the guidance of the whole church, he first lays stress upon the conduct of public worship. In the days of the apostles this worship was very simple in character, yet it was composed of those elements which are essential in most church services to-day, namely, prayer and praise and preaching. Paul insists that the scope of this prayer and thanksgiving should be universal, and that the task of public preaching should be entrusted not to women but to men.

"I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men." It is possible to trace shades of distinction between "supplications," "prayers," and "intercessions"; but Paul is not so much concerned with these as with impressing the fact that this prayer and praise should have in view all classes and conditions of men. There is always danger that public intercession and thanksgiving may voice the desires and aspirations of only fractions of worshiping congregations, or may confine the sympathy and thought of these worshipers to narrow and bounded horizons.

For one class in particular prayer is urged: "for kings and all that are in high place." Paul might have gone on to specify other classes, but he not unnaturally gives as examples of proper objects for universal prayer those men upon whom rest the greatest obligations and those who possess the widest power for evil and for good. It is the more significant that these commands were written in the days when Nero was emperor. If Paul commanded Christians to pray for such a "king," surely no man is to be regarded as beyond the realm in which Christian intercessors must feel a sympathy and concern.

Nor are we to forget that these prayers are to be united with "thanksgivings." These, in public worship, are most commonly expressed in the form of hymns, and it is evident from history that the singing of such hymns formed an element in public worship from the earliest days of the Church. Our hymns well may be prayers in their substance, and our prayers properly may be voiced in the form of hymns.

The reason which Paul assigns for such universal prayer and praise may appear to savor somewhat of selfishness, "that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." However, Paul does not mean that this is the only end which such prayers have in view. There are many other results which follow; and in any case, it is right for us to desire such tranquillity and peace as may worthily express, in life and conduct, our Christian faith, such tranquillity and peace as are only possible when public order is being properly preserved.

While these desirable results may be expected by Christians, yet the whole exhortation indicates that prayer on their part is to be unselfish. It is never to be limited to personal interests; it reaches out in its sympathies toward the whole human race.

Of such universal scope in prayer Paul declares, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;" for his love and sympathy are boundless. He "would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." All are included in his love. He is the Saviour of all, even though his salvation can be experienced only by those who accept his gracious provision. Salvation is not limited by his willingness, but by the reluctance and unbelief of men. This salvation is inseparable from faith, and therefore from "knowledge," as Paul indicates that "to be saved" involves coming "to the knowledge of the truth."

Paul further demonstrates that all men come within the saving purpose of God, and therefore should be remembered in prayer by the people of God, as he makes the great affirmation that "there is one God." The unity of the divine Being indicates that God stands in the same relation to all his creatures and that all mankind must be embraced alike in his mercy and his love.

This same truth is still further established by a reference to the incarnation, as Paul states that there is "one mediator also between God and men." There is no place, then, for the mediation of saints or of angels. Jesus Christ is the one and only Being through whom we have access to God. He truly represents God to man and man to God; and as there is only one such Being, and as he is "himself man" while at the same time God, the way to God must be open to all men alike.

A third proof that God would have all to be saved, and therefore that prayers are to be made for all, is found in the universal purpose of the atonement of Christ, "who gave himself a ransom for all." This voluntary giving of himself in life, and particularly in his atoning death, provided for all a way of deliverance from the guilt and power of sin; and inasmuch as this redeeming act was in place of all and

in behalf of all, therefore salvation must have been divinely intended for all.

It is the duty of the Church to proclaim to all this universal salvation and to further this work by continual petition. Now that redemption has been accomplished, and until all have heard its message, these are the "times" for this "testimony to be borne."

The ministry of Paul is a final argument for the universality of this salvation, for he has been sent to aid in this universal proclamation which was enjoined upon the Church. His ministry is not self-chosen. He has been appointed by God as a herald of the gospel; this is his work. He is an "apostle," that is, he is "one sent" on a divine mission, as he solemnly affirms. He has been delegated particularly as "a teacher of the Gentiles," that is, he is to bring the good news to the most distant and godless nations with a view to reaching the peoples of the whole world. He is to instruct these Gentiles as to the nature of saving truth and of the Christian faith. All this shows how wide is the gracious purpose of God. Shall the sympathies of his people be more restricted? Shall they not also yearn for the salvation of all men? And shall they not express this yearning in ceaseless sympathetic prayer?

It is true that public prayer for all men seems to us at times vague and unmeaning and unreal. Let us remember, however, that while unlimited in its scope, such prayer may be specific in its content. Paul by way of illustration designates "kings" and those in authority. He might have continued indefinitely his enumeration of the different classes who are the proper objects of petition. Even the prayer of public assemblies may be specific and pointed; and it never should be narrowed by selfishness or circumscribed by provincialism, or enfeebled by unbelief. Prayer always involves mysteries, but we should be encouraged to believe that its exercise is related to the salvation of human souls, and is therefore "good and acceptable in the sight of God."

2. The Demeanor of Men and Women. Ch. 2: 8-15

8 I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing. 9 In like manner,

that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; 10 but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works. 11 Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. 12 But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: 15 but she shall be saved through her child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

In giving instruction to Timothy as to the public worship of the Christian congregation, Paul first emphasized the universal scope of public prayer; he now dwells upon the spirit in which this prayer is to be offered and upon the behavior of the worshipers.

It will be remembered that in apostolic days the manner of public worship was extremely informal. No one order of service was followed and the duty of offering prayer or of giving spiritual instruction was limited to no one person. Here, however, Paul enjoins that men rather than women should lead in these acts of worship, "in every place" where congregations of believers assemble for public religious services. "I desire therefore that the men pray in every place." The force of the command, however, is not upon this restriction as to the persons who are to lead in worship but upon the spirit in which they are to pray. They are to do so "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing." The lifting up of the hands was a familiar and significant attitude in prayer; but Paul here is not insisting upon a posture of the body, but upon a state of the heart. Those who pray are to be free from sin and yielded to the service of God. Furthermore, they are to pray "without wrath and disputing." Some prefer to render these words, "without anger and doubting," and it is true that the conditions of effectual prayer are love toward man and faith in God.

However, as the apostle has in mind the whole period of public worship, he may refer to the acrimonious disputes and heated discussions which sometimes arose in those as-

semblies of the primitive Church. Those who were to offer prayer must be free from "wrath and disputing." Christians can worship God acceptably only in an atmosphere of love.

As to the women worshipers, they are to conduct themselves with becoming modesty. They are not to attract attention to themselves by excessive ornaments and by striking costume, but rather to be conspicuous for their goodness and grace. In describing this conduct Paul uses one word which since the days of Wyclif has been rendered into English by "shamefastness," and has been misunderstood usually because of the corrupt spelling "shamefacedness." The word has nothing to do with the "face" nor with "shame" as we use that word. "Shamefastness" is that conduct which is "held fast" by proper self-respect. It denotes demeanor which is restrained by true womanly reserve.

Accordingly, Paul advises, "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." The reference here is probably to "wives" in contrast to "husbands" and specifically to their conduct in public worship. Paul elsewhere indicates how helpful women may be as teachers, particularly in guiding the young. II Tim. 3: 14; Titus 2: 3. Then, too, later on in this epistle, Paul indicates that certain specified officers are expected to exercise the function of teaching the congregation. He here is urging women to be careful neither to interrupt the worship nor to assume the place of public official teachers in the Christian Church.

Paul gives two reasons for insisting upon choosing a man rather than his wife for this position of public teacher. The first is taken from the story of the creation: "Adam was first formed, then Eve." This to the apostle's mind intimated a certain independence or priority or responsibility which places upon a husband some duties from which a wife should be relieved.

The second is from the story of the Fall: "Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression." Adam acted in accordance with his own

choice and with his eyes open. On the other hand, Eve was deceived. In his act Adam was by no means morally superior to his wife, even if it is granted that his mind was more clear; and all that Paul intimates is that a woman, because of her greater trustfulness, is more easily misled into false beliefs and so is less qualified to be a public teacher of Christian truth. Paul does not mean that a woman is mentally or morally or spiritually inferior to a man. Both men and women have the defects of their qualities. However, both are on the same plane before God and are heirs to his eternal salvation. Therefore, Paul adds that, while a woman need not assume the official duties of a Christian pastor, nevertheless she may enjoy all the benefits of salvation, in her own more natural sphere of wife and mother, if she continues to be faithful and loving and holy, as well as modest and womanly in her demeanor.

It is not difficult to understand why such statements by Paul have made him unpopular with certain elect ladies of the present day. Yet it should be said in defense of the apostle that his writings, taken as a whole, have done more for the emancipation of woman, more to secure her social and civil and political rights, than the productions of any other author who could be named; and her highest happiness is enjoyed only in those countries where the Christian principles set forth by the great apostle are accepted and obeyed. If he does, however, in passages like this, distinguish between the respective duties of men and of women, it appears to many that this distinction "lies deep down in the facts of human nature as originally constituted." Let us be on our guard against drawing wide inferences from this particular chapter, even as to these respective duties. Paul is giving advice to Timothy as to the conduct of public worship, and his main message is this, namely, that whatever the parts assigned to men or to women, the Christian pastor should secure for the congregation a dignified, a reverent, a spiritual service, with a view to the edification of believers, and the salvation of all men.

B. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS. Ch. 3

1. Bishops. Ch. 3: 1-7

1 Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 The bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 no brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; 4 one that ruleth well his own house, having *his* children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Every Christian pastor is personally concerned with the matter of church organization. Whatever theory he may hold as to ecclesiastical polity, whether Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Congregational, he should seek to know the teachings of the New Testament and the practice of the primitive Church in matters of government and order. Such knowledge will give him assurance of the divine sanction for the high office he holds; it will prevent him from becoming autocratic as he understands the duties of his fellow officers, and his right relation to the congregation; it will protect him from being crushed by burdens he should share with others, and it will prepare him to plan and conduct with more of wisdom and efficiency the work entrusted to his care.

Therefore, when Paul has instructed Timothy as to the public worship of the church, he turns next to give directions as to its permanent organization. He specifies two classes of officers, "bishops" and "deacons," but makes here no mention of their respective duties or of their respective numbers. The whole stress is laid upon their qualifications.

With reference to the "bishop," however, it is stated

that he shall have ability as a public teacher, and the very word indicates further that he is to exercise oversight of the congregation. The term used is "*episkopos*," or "overseer," and seems to refer to the same officer elsewhere designated as "presbyter" or "elder." The office itself was derived possibly from the usage among the Jews whose synagogues were ruled by groups of "elders."

The duties of the "bishop" in the early Church, therefore, appear to have been those of spiritual oversight and of religious instruction. The nearest parallel in modern days to this office is that of the "pastor," and it is for this reason that these letters of the Apostle Paul are known as his Pastoral Epistles.

In referring to the office of bishop, Paul begins by quoting with approval a popular saying to the effect that "if a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." The currency of this saying indicates the high estimate in which the office was held. The saying indicates that the position was one not merely of honor or of ease, but involved "work" of the highest and most beneficent sort. It further intimates that there were those who really aspired to the office. Such aspirations Paul does not rebuke. They need to be aroused and encouraged in the present day. When one receives a "call to the ministry," this desire is simply deepened into a sacred conviction of duty.

For this important office Paul enumerates certain strict requirements. It is to be noted that most of these are moral and only one is mental. They should not be regarded as ground for undervaluing the intellectual qualifications for the Christian ministry, but they do call attention to the equally important spiritual qualifications which are demanded, and they indicate that an attractive personality is the supreme condition of success in ministerial service.

Paul, first of all, demands that an "overseer" of the Christian congregation must be "without reproach," not a man who merely has committed no offense, but one whose conduct gives "no handle" which could be laid hold of to injure his reputation.

He must be "the husband of one wife," that is, a faithful husband, or literally, "a man of one woman." The meaning of this phrase has been the occasion of endless controversy and is open to a number of interpretations. It can hardly refer to polygamy, for this would be tolerated in no Church member, and need not be specified in the case of an officer; nor does it refer, probably, to remarriage after the death of a wife, as Paul encouraged second marriages, and a man whose first wife was dead might be in all reality, after a second marriage, "the husband of one wife." It is quite possible that the reference is to remarriage after divorce. Such an act might involve misunderstandings and suspicions from which a church officer should be free.

A Christian pastor must be "temperate." This no more means to encourage moderate drinkers than the former phrase was intended to disqualify bachelors. It rather denotes sobriety in judgment as well as in act.

It is somewhat akin to the following term, "sober-minded." This last does not denote solemnity, nor gloom, although the appearance of some ministers may have given support to such a conclusion. It indicates seriousness, but more exactly, "self-control," and that perfect self-mastery which keeps one from the indulgence of the sensualist and from the austerity of the ascetic.

"Orderly" is an adjective which with propriety might be pressed upon the notice of many ministers, in their domestic habits as well as in their pastoral activities. The term refers, however, not to the physical but to the moral sphere, and denotes that outward conduct which is exhibited by one who is "temperate" and "sober-minded"; it denotes the demeanor of one who is not disorderly, who is "well-behaved," who is neither immodest nor shy, who is indeed a "true Christian gentleman."

The next virtue which Paul enjoins is that of "hospitality." In his day this was possibly even more important than it is in our day. Then proper places of public entertainment were difficult to find. Ancient inns were usually of ill repute. Then, too, Christian travelers were often poor, and hesitated to place themselves under obligation to unbelievers. Thus, by entertaining such travelers, particu-

larly such as were missionaries of the cross, the influence of the Church could be extended, while at the same time the spirit of love and sympathy could be shown. While the modern minister need not impoverish himself or overburden his wife, he will find many ways of manifesting this grace, or at least of revealing the generous spirit which is its soul. How perfectly this grace is being shown by workers on the "foreign field," only those who have accepted its bounties can testify. Paul was the first great missionary and his words are understood best by those who have sojourned in mission lands.

The next requirement was one which in the days of the apostle began to assume a new seriousness. It was from some points of view the most important of all the qualifications he suggested. The Church was being deprived by death of the personal followers of Christ and of the inspired prophets who had first proclaimed the gospel and instructed believers in Christian truth. It was necessary, therefore, that those officers who were given oversight of the larger congregations should be "apt to teach." Only thus, by placing upon these leaders responsibility for doctrine as well as for discipline, could the rising heresies be rebuked and the purity of the gospel preserved. Nor is there less need to-day for a teaching ministry. One who presides over the spiritual interests of a modern congregation should possess not merely the moral and spiritual qualifications Paul here enumerates, but should also be "apt to teach." A shepherd must feed his flock; a pastor must break the bread of life for his people and must rightly divide the word of truth. Ability for this sacred task is the supreme requirement for those to whom is entrusted the care of souls.

Referring again to moral equipment, one who is a "brawler" or "quarrelsome over wine," or violent in a similar manner for any other cause, is disqualified for the ministry as is one who is a "striker," that is one who in anger resorts to physical force. A Christian minister must be "gentle," sweetly reasonable, eager to show forbearance and kindly consideration; he must not be "contentious" or

quarrelsome, even as to matters of doctrine; nor must he be a "lover of money," a passion from which, in spite of their poverty, even Christian ministers are not always free. He must be "one that ruleth well his own house," able to keep his children submissive and respectful, for this will prove his capacity for government, obviously a necessary qualification for a pastor; "but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church," which is in reality the household of God.

Moreover, one is not to be appointed to the oversight of a congregation who is himself a recent convert to Christianity, "a novice." Such appointment might be necessary in a very young church like that in Crete. Therefore, Paul does not include this warning in writing to Titus; but at Ephesus, where twelve or more years had passed since the church was formed, it would be possible to secure as officers men of some maturity and spiritual experience. The particular peril of a young convert who is placed in a position of prominence and power is that of pride. As Paul intimates, a "novice" might be puffed up with self-conceit and vanity, and so fall under the doom incurred by the Devil, and ceasing to be a minister of light, he might become an instrument of darkness.

On the other hand, and as a last requirement, a person chosen as pastor "must have good testimony from them that are without"; that is, he must not only be favorably known by his fellow Christians, but he must also have a good reputation in the community where the church is located; otherwise his ill repute may bring obloquy upon the church, and the very fact that he is under suspicion and reproach may prove a temptation to recklessness and sin; this latter seems to be what Paul means by "the snare of the devil."

Such then is the list of qualifications for the pastoral office enumerated by the Apostle Paul. It is not to be regarded as exhaustive. These qualifications demand moral rather than mental excellence. They refer more to temperament, tact, experience, and reputation than to intellectual gifts. The latter certainly are not to be regarded as unnecessary. Nevertheless, however exacting the conditions

which the church at any time may impose upon candidates for the ministry, none will be more essential, more supremely important than that of a high Christian character.

2. Deacons. Ch. 3: 8–13

8 Deacons in like manner *must be* grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless. 11 Women in like manner *must be* grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

After specifying the qualifications of pastors, or "bishops," or "overseers," Paul passes to the enumeration of somewhat similar requirements for those who are to be chosen as "deacons." The exact nature of this secondary office in the Christian church is nowhere set forth in the New Testament. The origin of the office and its main functions are supposed to be described in the sixth chapter of The Acts, when seven men were chosen and ordained to administer the finances and, more specifically, to care for the poor of the congregation. These functions are, therefore, quite commonly assigned to this office, although in this matter there is no wide agreement among the different denominations of Christians. Some churches assign to deacons spiritual duties, while by others the office is wholly disregarded.

It would seem to be wise, and in accordance with the practice of the primitive Church, to have in every congregation the service of such authorized officers to aid the pastor in his work and to relieve him from the burden of many administrative duties, particularly in the care of the more needy members of the flock.

The first qualification for such officers is that they should be "dignified," or as the word is also translated, "grave,"

for even though their position is subordinate to that of the pastor, it is a place of honor, and their work is done in the name of the whole congregation of believers. Therefore, their tasks, however humble, are to be performed seriously and with becoming gravity.

Deacons are not to be "double-tongued," that is, saying one thing to one person and another to another, and so giving rise to misunderstandings and discord and forfeiting the confidence of the churches they serve.

They are not to be addicted to wine, nor "greedy of filthy lucre." This last phrase of the apostle does not indicate that he regarded money as evil in itself. Possibly the translation "base gain" may be preferable. The reference here is not merely to the love of money, but to the dishonest acquiring of money; and the warning here is particularly pertinent for deacons, as they are expected to administer the finances of the church and to be the custodians of its trust funds. Judas was not the last treasurer who betrayed his Lord for a few pieces of silver.

On the contrary, the deacons were to be men whose consciences were clear, or as Paul says, men "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." A "mystery," in the New Testament, means a truth once concealed but now revealed. "The mystery of the faith," therefore, means the knowledge of Christ and his salvation. This was to be regarded as a sacred treasure and those who held it in their hearts were to keep their consciences clean from any stain.

Nor were these deacons to be appointed hastily to their office. They should "first be proved," or tested, either by a period of probationary training, or by a careful examination of their past, and only when found "blameless," or free from accusation, could they be allowed to serve the church.

Their "wives," too, must meet the same requirements as themselves, for they would often find it necessary to share with their husbands the performance of delicate duties. It is true, many feel that the reference here is not to the "wives" of deacons, as indicated by the Authorized Version, but to an order of "deaconesses." The Revised Ver-

sion leaves the matter undetermined by translating the word, "women." It is surely safe to say that the requirements here mentioned are such as may well be regarded proper for all women workers in the church, whether deaconesses, the wives of deacons, or other women performing similar tasks.

These women must be "grave," that is, comporting themselves with the same dignity as the deacons. They must not be "slanderers," for it would be very easy to make a wrong use of the many details which they would learn in reference to the private lives of the members of the congregation and of their families.

They must be "temperate" and sane, and not governed merely by their emotions. They must be absolutely reliable and trustworthy and "faithful in all things."

This reference is made to the wives of deacons, probably because Paul is proceeding to refer, as a climax of his requirements, to the family life of these church officers. They are to be "faithful husbands," or, as the words are commonly rendered, "husbands of one wife"; they are to be men who are "ruling their children and their own houses well."

These latter requirements are made also of bishops, but on different grounds. Bishops are thus to show their qualification to be spiritual rulers and "overseers"; deacons are thus to win and preserve the esteem and confidence of their fellow Christians.

Therefore Paul concludes by saying that those who meet these requirements, both as to private life and as to official conduct, "gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." The exact meaning of these phrases is not quite clear; but from what he has just written, he seems to indicate that such fidelity in office, however humble may be the duties of the deacons, will not fail to secure for them high respect and enviable positions of wholesome influence in the church. They will experience also great "boldness," or "assurance," in their service, not only because they consciously enjoy the confidence of the congregations they serve, but because of their continual faith in Christ Jesus, their Master and their Lord.

3. The Importance of the Church. Ch. 3: 14-16

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; 15 but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness;

He who was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the spirit,
Seen of angels,
Preached among the nations,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.

Nothing can be of more encouragement to a Christian minister in his important work, nothing can make him more careful in conducting the public service of the congregation and in securing the appointment of duly qualified officers, than his realizing the divine origin of the Church and its sacred function of supporting and transmitting the glorious truth which centers in Christ.

Thus, when Paul has given Timothy instructions as to public worship and as to the qualification of church officers, he explains his motives in writing and here emphasizes his exhortations by reminding Timothy of the important place which the Church occupies, and by giving a brief popular summary of its most important teachings.

He states that he expects soon to visit Timothy in Ephesus: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly." He realizes, however, the uncertainty of his plans and the possibility of delay, "but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God." He feels, therefore, that in any case these general directions will indicate how men and women, pastors and deacons, are to conduct themselves in the Church, which is in reality the family or household of God, which as such should be carefully directed. He further designates this divine household as "the church of the living God," indicating that it is not a human but a divine institution, and that it must be ordered according to the will of God.

Further still, Paul designates the Church as "the pillar and ground of the truth," for just as a pillar supports a roof, or as a foundation sustains a building, so this society of believers has been divinely appointed to sustain and uphold in the world the truth which God has revealed to man.

That the whole system of Christian belief is thus a divine revelation and not a human invention, Paul indicates by describing it as "the mystery of godliness." According to New Testament usage, a "mystery" does not signify something concealed or baffling or obscure, but it denotes a secret which has been made known; thus the counsels of grace for the salvation of mankind have been revealed through Jesus Christ and are summarized in the gospel, which is called thus specifically "the mystery of godliness," for its great purpose and its result is to produce godliness, or to persuade and enable men to do the holy will of God.

This mystery Paul declares to be "great," not in its obscurity, but in its importance; it is weighty, significant, sublime. It is such "without controversy," that is, beyond all question or doubt. That its greatness is admitted and acknowledged, Paul intimates as he summarizes its main contents by quoting a primitive creed or confession of the Christian faith. Because of the balanced and rhythmic structure of the phrases, many believe it to be the fragment of an ancient hymn. Therefore it is printed in the Revised Version as a stanza of six lines, or as two stanzas with three lines each. Possibly better still, it may be regarded as composed of three couplets, for this grouping of the phrases brings out more forcibly the contrasts of the successive lines:

"Manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the spirit,

"Seen of angels,
Preached among the nations,

"Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory."

The Person who is the subject of each one of these statements is Jesus Christ our Lord. It matters little whether the first line reads "God was manifested in the flesh," or "He who was manifested in the flesh." The latter is probably more correct, but in either case we have a clear and definite statement of the Deity and incarnation of Christ. It would be impossible to make such a statement of a being who was only man. "He who was manifested in the flesh" previously must have been higher and greater than man. This statement of Paul is like that of John: "The Word became flesh." He who had existed from all eternity in the form of God was manifest in mortal flesh as the God Man, Christ Jesus.

He was "justified in the spirit"; here the first contrast is drawn: it is between "flesh" and "spirit," but these words are not used in the sense in which they are commonly placed in contrast by the apostle when he wishes to distinguish that which is evil in Christians from that which is good. By "spirit" he here means the inmost being of Christ— his heart, his soul, the spring of all his motives and desires; even in this realm he was shown or declared or proved to be just and sinless and faultless and perfect. The first line speaks of his real humanity, the second of his complete holiness; the former of his actual manhood, the latter of his spiritual perfection.

He was "seen of angels." They sang at his birth, they ministered in the hour of his temptation. They attended his teaching in Galilee. They strengthened him in his agony. They guarded his tomb. They proclaimed his resurrection. They witnessed his ascension and predicted his return. Of their presence he was ever conscious, and now in countless array they stand about his throne.

In contrast with the angels, Gentiles are next mentioned. He was "preached among the nations." He has not been seen by them, but what may be even better, he has been so proclaimed that by accepting the message, men of all nations are being transformed into his likeness and fitted for his service.

Thus the last couplet contains this contrast: "Believed on in the world, received up in glory." There is, then, a

sphere brighter and better than the world in which we live. Into it our Lord has entered, and to it he will bring all who accept the salvation he has prepared. He calls them to be heirs of his glory.

Whether these six lines were borrowed from an early Christian hymn, or whether they here were first written by Paul, they contain such a majesty of meaning that the apostle is justified in declaring that such realities are of supreme importance, and that the Church which maintains and supports them is "the pillar and ground of the truth": and it is not strange that he was deeply concerned about the public services and the appointed officers of this divine society which was ordained to convey these glad tidings to all the world.

III. Advice to Timothy Chs. 4:1 to 6:2

A. PERSONAL LIFE AND DUTIES. Ch. 4

1. Warning Against False Doctrine. Ch. 4: 1-5

1 But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; 3 forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer.

No pastor can hope to escape the pain of having false teachers appear among the members of his flock. Against this peril, however, he must be on his guard. At times it will be necessary to discipline even church officers whose influence is subversive of the peace and faith of the congregation, as Paul indicates in the next chapter. Here, however, in the chapter now opening, he dwells upon the first and fundamental duty of a pastor, under such circumstances, which is to counteract such evil influences by right living and sound teaching.

Such personal advice to Timothy seems to form the substance of the remaining portion of the letter and to constitute its second great division. The line of separation between the parts, however, is not to be emphasized too strongly. As a matter of fact, the course of thought is rather continuous. Paul has just given a summary of Christian doctrine in order to emphasize the need of properly organizing the Church which is "the pillar and ground of the truth." He now turns to warn Timothy of the attacks certain to be made upon the faith of which the Church is the appointed support and stay. The very fact of such false teaching further emphasizes what Paul has said in the

first part of the letter in reference to the necessity of allowing only properly qualified persons to conduct the public worship and to serve as officers of the Church.

Paul here declares that in spite of all that the Church can do to guard the sacred deposit of truth, defections from the faith would surely take place. Such had been predicted already and with great definiteness by men who were divinely inspired: "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith." Years before, when bidding farewell to the Ephesian elders, the apostle himself had said, "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them." Acts 20:29,30. So, too, in an earlier letter to the Thessalonians, he pictured a great apostasy which is immediately to precede the close of the present age. To these and to similar predictions of other apostles and of our Lord himself, Paul may here refer. However, it is evident that he is not fixing his thought upon a distant future. Although he speaks of "later times," he proceeds to warn Timothy against perils already prevalent. Indeed, the frequent references in the New Testament to the dark days of doubt and apostasy which precede the return of Christ are so phrased that the reader may be warned by them of dangers from which no age is free, and may be on guard against forms of unbelief and against corrupting practices which are prevalent in every age.

The cause of the falling away which Paul here describes is traced by him to the influence of "seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." Thus, in contrast to the Spirit of truth, he intimates that the false teachings prevalent in the Ephesian church are to be ultimately attributed to the Spirit of error. These doctrines taught by demons, however, are voiced through human agents, by men who in "hypocrisy" and under the guise of being spiritual leaders, "speak lies." They have grown so accustomed to sin, they are such willing and obedient servants of error, as to be "branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron."

The two particular errors of which they are guilty, as

specified here, are their "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." The heresy, therefore, was in the nature of a false asceticism. It taught self-denial for its own sake, rather than with a view to accomplishing some great good.

Paul often is supposed to have opposed marriage. This passage, on the contrary, shows that, to his mind, compulsory celibacy, as a rule of life, was of demonic rather than of divine origin. Paul advised marriage; he regarded it as a divine ordinance. Even for a "bishop" or a "deacon" he declared it to be proper for one to be "the husband of one wife," and to be the head of a godly household. It is true, however, that Paul elsewhere admits that exceptions to this rule might be allowable and even admirable. He declares that occasionally one may have the gift of celibacy and that, at a special crisis in history and to perform a particular task for the Church, he might remain unmarried. He never indicates, however, that this is a ground for praise or an indication of any higher degree of spiritual life. The latter was the essence of the false teaching which he here rebukes. This departure from the faith was led by men who regarded marriage as degrading and who forbade those to marry who wished to be well-pleasing to God and to attain the greater heights of spiritual experience.

Thus, too, in reference to the command given by the false teachers, "to abstain from meats," that is, from food of various kinds, and not simply from flesh; although it is true that the latter was usually prohibited by the leaders of the early heretical sects. Paul, of course, agreed with his Master in admitting that fasting might be a means to a worthy end. It might be endured for the sake of physical health, or to express real sorrow, or to share food with others, or to make some spiritual exercise more profitable; but what he condemned was the teaching that fasting is in itself praiseworthy or that refraining from certain kinds of proper foods is meritorious or wins the special favor of God. On the contrary, he insists that food has been "created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth"; not by these alone, but by these as well as by others. Paul would teach that the fact of being a

Christian does not place one in a different position from his fellow men in relation to the things which God has created for the good of the human race. Those who "believe and know the truth" are not for that reason to abstain from any kind of healthful food; as Paul adds, "for every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving." The word "creature" might suggest only animate things, but the reference here is more wide and refers to everything made by God. Everything is "good" and is to be gratefully accepted and used in accordance with its divine intent and purpose. To make distinctions between various kinds of wholesome food on the ground that the use of one and the rejection of the other is a sign or means of spiritual grace, is not only absurd; it is also the mark and proof of a spurious asceticism, even of demonic unbelief.

True faith accepts all the beneficent creations of God with thanksgiving, and even the most common food "is sanctified through the word of God and prayer." This latter seems rightly to refer to the custom of thanksgiving before meals. This was in accordance with the example of our Lord, who blessed the bread before he broke it. It seems to have been a universal custom in the early Church. These thanksgivings included phrases from Scripture and these are possibly indicated by "the word of God." They were solemn but joyful recognitions of the goodness and mercy and grace of God. They designated him as the Giver of every good and perfect gift. No food of which believers partake in such a spirit of gratitude can be regarded as evil; even the simplest repast thus becomes almost a sacrament.

2. Exhortation to Godly Living. Ch. 4: 6-10

6 If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed *until now:* 7 but refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness: 8 for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. 9 Faithful is the saying, and worthy

of all acceptation. 10 For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe.

In the previous paragraph Paul has been warning Timothy against the false doctrines which taught that Christians would attain to higher holiness if they refrained from marriage and abstained from certain foods. Timothy is here exhorted to withstand such false doctrine by sound teaching and by personal piety. In his teaching he is to present to his fellow Christians the truths which Paul has just set forth as to the proper use of food, which God had created for the use of man, which was to be received with thanksgiving and sanctified by prayer. He is to rebuke asceticism and to show the right relation which Christians are to sustain to the good gifts God has granted for the well-being of men: "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus."

The last phrase is one of peculiar beauty if used to describe a faithful pastor of a Christian church; it is a high honor to be called in that sense "a good minister of Christ Jesus." Paul, however, does not use the phrase with this meaning. By the word "minister" he does not refer to a church officer; he uses the term in its original meaning of a "servant," and he declares that by such true teaching Timothy will show himself to be a faithful servant of his Lord, he will render a real service to Jesus Christ. He will show that he is "nourished in the words of the faith," and indeed he must continue to be so nourished by the sound teaching of the gospel as to practical life, if his service is to be faithful. Such teaching Timothy had accepted always, as Paul intimates in the phrase, "which thou hast followed until now."

On the other hand, Timothy must be careful to resist and to shun the wicked and silly myths of the false teachers: "But refuse profane and old wives' fables." Instead of following the foolish and evil practices of the false ascetics, Timothy must train himself in spirituality and discipline himself in true piety. "Exercise thyself unto godliness," Paul significantly says. The severity to the body

advocated by false teachers was worse than useless; however, there is a kind of bodily discipline which may be a help to holiness, namely, the refusal to allow the appetites to rule the will, the restraint and control exercised over the body by a sound mind and a pure heart.

Such discipline, like all physical training, does have its benefits; but there is even a higher discipline of the spirit itself, which brings to man unlimited and abiding good: "for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." A consistent Christian walk does not necessarily forfeit the best things which the present life has to promise, and it is certain to issue in the higher joys of the life that is to come. In a certain real sense the Christian "makes the best of both worlds." Piety is consistent with worldly advancement; under certain conditions it secures it; however, to practice piety for the sake of such advancement is impious. The Christian may enjoy prosperity, but if he follows Christ only for the sake of gain, he does not understand his Master. The "promise," however, assured to piety is of the truest blessedness, and of glorious well-being both here and hereafter. Such blessedness may be accompanied by present discomfort and self-denial and distress; but, for those who really trust in God, it will issue in the highest possible life and in eternal joy: "godliness is profitable," in this sense; and Paul declares the "saying" to be "faithful" and "worthy of all acceptation;" but he at once adds that it may be accompanied by present pain and discipline: "for to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God." He will at last vindicate his claims to justice. He gives grace needed for the present, and promises glory in the world to come. He is the "Saviour of all men," for them he has provided life in all its fullness, he has made possible, for all, the highest well-being; yet he conditions this blessedness upon faith in Christ, so that while God is the Saviour of all, Paul can add, "specially of them that believe."

In contrast with spurious asceticism, true piety is "profitable for all things"; in contrast with the bodily training

which may secure "a corruptible crown," those who exercise themselves unto godliness will receive a crown of life that will never fade away.

3. Encouragement to Faithful Service. Ch. 4: 11-16

11 These things command and teach. 12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all. 16 Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.

It would be difficult to imagine six verses more weighted with wise counsel for a young minister than these. Nor are they lacking in significance to the members of the flock, who need to know the nature of the cares and duties and temptations and trials which press upon the Christian pastor, who thus may be the better prepared to extend to him their sympathy, and to profit by his ministry.

First of all, Paul enjoins Timothy to command and to commend the conduct and the principles he has just been outlining, in view of the false teaching at Ephesus. Such errors of practice can be met in part by the godly life which Timothy has been encouraged to lead. However, the silent influence of a holy example may not always suffice to correct evil conduct. Sometimes it is necessary for a minister of Christ to speak out with that authority granted him by the whole Church at the time of his ordination. Therefore Paul urges, "These things command and teach"; Timothy is to enjoin certain behavior and he is to "teach" the moral principles involved. Some Christian truths are so fundamental and some forms of duty so obvious that a minister can often speak with authority even though he is not dictatorial or dogmatic.

One thing which might have tempted Timothy to keep silent, even in the face of obvious errors of teaching and

practice, was his youth. Therefore Paul encourages him to "let no man despise" him or set him aside on this account. After all, age is a relative matter. Timothy, in point of fact, was no child. He had been traveling as a companion of Paul for some sixteen years, and must have been surely as old as sixteen when he left his home. However, here at Ephesus were teachers and leaders who may have been twice his age, men who held positions of influence in the church and community, men who were the more powerful because of the false asceticism which gave them a reputation for saintliness, and who were revered because of their advancing years, yet who must be rebuked and publicly admonished by the young pastor whom Paul had sent to represent him and to order aright the affairs of the church. It is not strange that he uses the words, "Let no man despise thy youth." Nor was Timothy the last youthful pastor to need the comfort of these words. To act as the public mentor and guide of those who are more mature and more experienced is a task which throws one back upon his Master, and makes him depend upon divine grace, and seek more earnestly to understand the inspired Word that he may speak with the authority which becomes an ambassador of Christ, however many or few his years.

Two things, at least, a young minister can do; first, he can be careful as to his life and service, and secondly he can remember his divine commission. Both of these courses of action Paul points out to Timothy. Instead of showing timidity, because conscious of his youth or other limitations, Timothy was urged to be "an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity." Possibly the "word" and "manner of life" may refer to Timothy's public activity, and the "love" and "faith" and "purity" may define the virtues which were to mold more particularly his private conduct. In any event, these terms describe for us conduct of such beauty and charm as would disarm any criticism based upon the mere fact that Timothy was young. It is often true to-day that even a youthful pastor so commends himself by his life and service that his comparative immaturity and his lack of experience are forgotten or overlooked. Ad-

vanced years usually bring a ripeness which qualifies for the highest service, yet much of the work of the pastorate can be done successfully by one who, whatever his age, is an example to his flock in the character of his public utterance, in his social life, and by his manifest love and faith and purity.

As to the public service which Timothy is to render, Paul specifies the three elements which have always constituted the main task of the preacher. He is to "give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." By the first of these three, Paul means the public reading of the Scripture. It is probably not unkind to say that a very large proportion of those who have succeeded Timothy in the work of the Christian ministry have not given very careful attention to the solemn responsibility and to the great privilege of such public reading. Too frequently it is done listlessly, thoughtlessly, and badly. A Christian minister should "give heed" to this difficult art.

The second of these terms, "exhortation," implies what we commonly understand by preaching. It, too, requires preparation and thought and care. It is associated by Paul with "teaching." Possibly the two are closely allied in meaning, but surely there is a definite message, in the last word, for the pastor of the present day. He is really to be a teacher, and this task is not to be confined simply to the pulpit, although it is to begin there. It includes all those methods whereby the members of the flock, both old and young, are not merely exhorted to the performance of certain duties, but are wisely instructed in all the truths of the Christian faith and are led out into various forms of unselfish service.

Timothy is further warned and encouraged by being reminded of his ordination. In spite of his comparative youth, he is to speak out boldly as Paul has already urged, and he is to remember that if he fails so to do, it will become more and more difficult for him to perform his obvious task. Therefore Paul adds, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Here Paul reminds his young friend of the experience which had been

his when he had been solemnly set aside as a minister of Christ. At that time the elders, as they laid upon him their hands in the solemn service of ordination, had recognized the gracious gift for teaching and for administering to the church which the Holy Spirit had bestowed upon Timothy, and which was in accordance with the inspired predictions which had led Paul to choose him as a companion in the ministry. This gracious gift Timothy must exercise. Therefore Paul continues, "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all." Inactivity, even laziness, has been said to be a besetting sin of the ministry. If so, it is a sin against which ministers are usually on their guard. It is a temptation which is most commonly overcome. Nevertheless, it may at times be necessary for young pastors to be urged to show diligence in their task and not to be held back either by timidity or slothfulness or fear. In the ministry one must show continual growth. He will either progress or fall back. Ceaseless vigilance is here, as elsewhere, the price of continued and increasing usefulness, and progress is possible only along the path of diligence in the performance of daily tasks.

Thus Paul gives as a closing exhortation, "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching." The pastor needs to prepare not only his sermons, but also himself. One who is giving constant heed to his own character, to his mental growth, and to his spiritual development, will be certain to make his progress manifest to all.

If this is his habit of life, as Paul says, if he is found to "continue in these things," he will then have the experience which Paul intimates to Timothy—"in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee"—for it is true that by fidelity to duty one does further secure his own salvation and also that of those who are committed to his guidance and care.

B. PASTORAL OVERSIGHT. Chs. 5: 1 to 6: 2

1. The Old and the Young. Ch. 5: 1, 2

1 Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brethren: 2 the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity.

There are many duties which devolve upon a Christian minister in his capacity of pastor as distinct from that of preacher. He must deal with the members of his flock as individuals, in addition to addressing them at public gatherings. To him is given the care or the "cure" of souls, and this difficult task can be accomplished only by personal contacts. It requires sympathy and patience, and wisdom and skill. It makes one a more helpful preacher, but it secures results which cannot be attained by preaching. Each age, each condition, each separate soul needs special treatment.

Therefore, when Paul, in earlier portions of his letter, has instructed Timothy in the conduct of congregational worship, when he has urged him to be careful and faithful in this public reading of the Scripture, in exhortation and instruction, he now turns to urge him to accord to the persons under his care the consideration and treatment appropriate to the age, the position, the need, and the dignity of each.

When he says, first of all, "Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father," he does not refer to a church officer, an "elder" or presbyter or bishop, but to one of the older men of his congregation. These are not to be treated harshly or censured unkindly, but even when they are at fault, respect for age must temper the form of rebuke.

Nor should the young men be sharply reprimanded. At times severity might be necessary, but the spirit of the admonition should be loving and never vindictive or bitter; in fact, Timothy was to treat "the younger men as brethren."

The same kindly, courteous consideration was to be shown to the women of the congregation; to "the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters;" and here the apostle adds significantly, "in all purity," for any breach of strict propriety may injure or destroy the reputation and influence of even the most eloquent preacher or the most energetic pastor.

2. Widows. Ch. 5: 3-16

3 Honor widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God. 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, hath her hope set on God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 These things also command, that they may be without reproach. 8 But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. 9 Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, *having been* the wife of one man, 10 well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work. 11 But younger widows refuse: for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry; 12 having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge. 13 And withal they learn also *to be* idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. 14 I desire therefore that the younger *widows* marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling: 15 for already some are turned aside after Satan. 16 If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

Church finance offers problems which every Christian pastor must face. No matter how faithful and efficient the officers appointed to administer the temporal affairs of a congregation, the pastor, under ordinary circumstances, must aid in the adoption of wise measures both for raising

and for dispensing the money necessary to further the work of the church. This is particularly true in reference to the funds employed in relief of the poor.

Upon this phase of pastoral oversight Paul casts no little light as he instructs Timothy in reference to the care of widows who were dependent upon the church. He does not give all the directions needed by a minister to-day, and he includes certain references which may not apply directly to finance; but he does illustrate certain abiding principles which are as important as they are obvious.

First, the administration of finances is as truly a matter which concerns the welfare of a church as the conduct of public services or the appointment of qualified officers. It received the same careful consideration by an inspired apostle as he wrote to a young pastor at Ephesus.

Second, the burden of church support should be fairly distributed, and those best able should assume the largest share.

Third, every church should care for the poor among its own numbers. Usually, no Church member should be a care to the community or dependent upon public charity.

Fourth, the poor funds should be distributed with great care and wisdom. No persons should be supported who are able to care for themselves, or who have relatives upon whom they may depend. Only those who are worthy as well as needy should be aided regularly. Every effort should be made to encourage independence, to share responsibility, and to maintain the good name of the church and its members.

In introducing the discussion Paul urges Timothy to "honor widows that are widows indeed." He has been speaking of the courteous consideration which should be given to all the various classes in the congregation, to men and women, to young and old. Thus by the word "honor" he meant to denote regard and sympathy, but also such respect as would manifest itself in material comforts and in financial aid when such were needed.

By "widows indeed" were meant those who were truly bereft and helpless, and who also conducted themselves with becoming dignity and propriety

Those who had "children or grandchildren" were hardly to be regarded as helpless. These members of their own households should assume the burden of cheering their loneliness and of supplying their wants. These children should "learn" from Timothy to regard this as a "first" duty, even taking precedence to any form of church or charitable work. They must be taught that "charity begins at home." This care for widowed parents is a true way "to show piety," for it is required by the Fifth Commandment, and in immediate connection with duties owed to God; further, it is an act of proper gratitude in return for similar care already received in years of helplessness; it is merely what might be expected of children, namely, "to requite their parents"; it "is acceptable in the sight of God" and regarded as a service rendered to him.

If, however, the support of a widow is to fall upon the church, great care must be exercised to determine that she is worthy of this care. In some large measure she must be otherwise helpless; she must also be one who has "her hope set on God," and who lives a life characterized by devotion and prayer.

On the other hand, a woman who has private means, or who gives herself wholly to pleasure and indulgence, one indeed who is spiritually "dead," should on no account receive financial support from the church.

Timothy is urged to impress these principles upon believers—not only upon widows, but also upon those to whom the latter might rightfully look for support. Paul adds that if any one of the latter fails in his obvious duty to provide for his relatives "and especially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." This truth applies to others besides widows. It refers to the proper care for children and kindred. This, even the dictates of reason and natural affection would demand. Even an unconverted pagan would show such consideration for his own relatives.

It is pitiful to note how often this precept of the apostle is abused as a cloak for the niggardly support of Christian work by men who are heaping up fortunes to be squandered by their children. They declare that they are caring for

their own. It is possible to do this worthy thing in such a selfish way as to be no better than "an unbeliever."

As to those who are enrolled as regular recipients of aid from the church, Paul specifies that "none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old." As this is an absolute requirement, it is rather difficult to agree with the many who hold that Paul is here describing an order of deaconesses, or of church widows, to whom were entrusted certain official duties in connection with the life and work of the congregation. It would rather appear that the comparatively advanced age of all these widows who were to be supported by the church indicates that they were supposed to be beyond the years of active toil and were intended by the apostle to be freed from care in their declining years.

Yet age was not the sole requirement. High Christian character was insisted upon by the apostle quite as definitely. One who was enrolled must have been "the wife of one man." This can hardly mean that a widow who had been married twice was ineligible to such church support, for Paul proceeds at once to urge young widows to marry. It is represented as being altogether in accordance with the divine will that such second marriages should take place. It is difficult to suppose, therefore, that one who in her youth, after the death of her husband, marries again should therefore be thus penalized so that if again bereaved, and if utterly helpless and friendless, she could not be supported by the church. Probably the expression means a woman whose married life had been blameless and unblemished.

She must also have been a good mother, in case she had been granted children; and further, she must have been a generous hostess as far as means and opportunities had permitted; she must have "used hospitality to strangers." She must have "washed the saints' feet," not literally, but as the phrase must indicate, she must have been ready to render humble ministries to her fellow Christians; and further, she must have "relieved the afflicted," giving sympathy to all who were in distress; and in short, she must have lived a life of loving service, having "diligently followed every good work."

On the other hand, young widows were not to be placed on the roll of those dependent upon the church for support, for such a practice would be dangerous both for them and for the good name of the church. Because of their very youth, they might feel the restraints of a life of such sanctity and seriousness as widows supported by the church were apparently supposed to lead, and they might incur the charge of unfaithfulness to Christ, or at least, as these words of Paul are more commonly understood, they would by their marriage break the pledge made when they were placed upon the roll of dependent widows. Further, even though unmarried, the fact that they were being supported without working while young and full of vigor, would place them in danger of becoming idle gossipers, meddlesome and reckless in speech. Paul therefore earnestly advises "that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling." By the "adversary" Paul probably means the unbeliever who might be eager to spread an evil report of a professing Christian: but Paul warns young widows of a similar and more terrible Adversary, and shows that his fears are not unfounded and his advice not unnecessary, when he adds that some have already left the Christian life and "turned aside after Satan."

In conclusion Paul refers again to the necessity of relieving the church from the care of those who have relatives on whom they might depend. He widens the principle, however, and relieves it from possible misunderstanding. Not only are men to care for widowed mothers and grandmothers, as an earlier sentence has required, but women, also, must do everything in their power to support needy relatives that the burden may not fall upon the church. "If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened." There will always be a great demand upon the church for relief and aid; this must be given gladly and liberally. Yet for this very reason it must be given carefully and wisely, in order that the funds may suffice to aid those who are most truly in need. Thus can the good name of the church be main-

tained; thus can Christ be served in the persons of those who belong to him and whose hope is in him.

3. Elders. Ch. 5: 17-25

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire. 19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at *the mouth of* two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear. 21 I charge *thee* in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. 22 Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure. 23 Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. 24 Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some men also they follow after. 25 In like manner also there are good works that are evident; and such as are otherwise cannot be hid.

Much of the success or failure attending the work of a pastor will be due to the officers of the particular church he serves. These men can make or mar his ministry. The high qualifications for such official positions were set forth in the third chapter of this epistle. Paul here turns to consider the relation which Timothy sustains to the chief order of these officers, namely the "elders"; and he refers specifically to their remuneration, their discipline, and the necessity of carefully ascertaining their worthy character before setting them aside for their sacred tasks.

It is true that wide differences of opinion exist as to the exact nature of the "elders" or "presbyters," just as there is even wider divergence in practice among modern churches as to the duties assigned to those officers who more or less exactly correspond to these ministers of the primitive Church. It is commonly supposed, however, that they were the spiritual rulers of the local church, and that while the duties of oversight were common to all, some of them served in addition as preachers and teachers, and that is the meaning of Paul as he here directs Timothy,

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching." That is, there was one office but two functions; all elders ruled, that was their essential duty; some also exercised the gift of public instruction. All who ruled faithfully and well, particularly if they rendered the additional service of preaching, were to be "counted worthy of double honor." The last word indicates not merely the high respect and deference to be shown them, but also the stipend which they were to receive. This financial remuneration was to be proportioned to fidelity and the amount of time devoted to official duties.

The principle was enforced by a quotation from the Old Testament: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn"; that is, the ox, when engaged in threshing grain, should be left free to take necessary food; so, by way of analogy, a minister who was devoting his time and energies to Christian work should receive support from the Christian church.

Paul further quotes what is commonly regarded as a popular proverb: "The laborer is worthy of his hire." As used by our Lord, this saying now forms a part of inspired Scripture, and expresses the common belief of the Church, as sanctioned by Paul, that one who is engaged in preaching the gospel, and in similar sacred ministry, should receive proper remuneration from the community of believers.

The pastor is further concerned with the discipline of these officers. In fact, church finance, as illustrated in the matter of administering the poor fund and securing the salaries of ministers, seems to be of no greater importance to the apostle than the maintenance of the good name of the Church, which can be secured only by the rebuke and punishment of offenders, particularly of such as hold high positions of responsibility as spiritual rulers.

However, Timothy is cautioned to proceed with extreme care. He is not to act upon mere rumor. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." It is unwise to begin a legal process in-

volving serious charges unless there is in hand sufficient evidence to make conviction practically certain.

On the other hand, when the sin is open or confessed, or when guilt has been established, then the rebuke is to be publicly administered, or at least in the presence of all the church officers, that others may be warned of their peril and may fear to commit similar offenses.

Most solemnly does Paul charge Timothy to carry out these injuctions, and in every case to act without prejudice or partiality, as one who is standing in the presence of the eternal Judge, whose conduct is known to his Master, who is observed by the holy angels, whom Paul calls "elect" not as specifying an angelic order, but as referring to those supernatural agents of God who have kept true to him and have been sent to minister to the heirs of salvation.

Great caution is to be exercised by Timothy as to the men who are candidates for this sacred office. They are not to be ordained unless Timothy is certain as to their qualifications and character: "Lay hands hastily on no man."

The special reason assigned for such caution is the fact that one who has a part in appointing to the ministry unworthy men, must be regarded as sharing in the wrong such men subsequently commit. Against such partnership in evil Timothy must be on his guard. "Keep thyself pure," writes the apostle, with a strong accent on "thyself," for in dealing with the sins of others, and in acting as a judge of the moral character of others, there is special reason that Timothy should keep himself honorable, and upright and blameless.

However, he is to be on his guard against a false asceticism. Either as an act of self-denial or a protest against prevailing excess, Timothy had been refraining from all use of wine; therefore Paul advises him as follows: "Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."

In view of the injurious character of alcoholic drinks, Paul has been criticized frequently for his advice. It should be noticed, however, that it is the medicinal use of wine

that Paul proposes, and, that he regards the kind of wine which Timothy could secure as calculated to relieve him from the ailments by which he was distressed. It would seem obvious that the weak stomach of Timothy should not be used as an argument that modern liquor is needed as a beverage.

However, if wine was recommended by Paul as a remedy for sickness, it is a fair question whether any Christians are right in teaching that "the prayer of faith" should be the only recourse for the cure of disease, and that medicines or other "means" should not be employed.

The very advice which Paul gives to Timothy seems to caution him against any false extremes, and to urge him to use his sanctified common sense.

Above all, these words of the apostle bear on their very surface a principle upon which all will probably agree, namely, that a Christian minister needs to have a due regard to maintaining his bodily health. A pale, weak, emaciated ascetic is not the ideal pastor proposed by Paul, and while the Pastoral Epistles are full of exhortations to spiritual attainments and excellencies, it is to the credit of the great apostle that he does not feel it is beneath his dignity to advise a young minister as to his diet, and concerning the recovery or maintenance of physical health.

This, however, is by way of parenthesis. Timothy is being instructed as to the need of disciplining men for their sins and of carefully judging the moral character of candidates for the office of elder; and Paul adds a final word of encouragement to assure him that there is usually no need of haste, and that he must not be timid.

In the same way, "there are good works that are evident," so that in their light it is easy to form correct impressions as to the character of the men who perform them; "and such as are otherwise," that is, are for a time concealed, "cannot be hid" permanently; they are certain to be revealed some day. Thus, in the case of worthy men, our high estimate of their characters will ultimately be confirmed. With such facts in mind, it should not be regarded impossible either to administer discipline or to choose men who are worthy to fill the positions of spiritual oversight.

4. Slaves. Ch. 6: 1, 2

1 Let as many as are servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed. 2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but let them serve them the rather, because they that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved. These things teach and exhort.

In the days of the early Christians the institution of slavery was universal throughout the Roman Empire, and was recognized and established by law. It gave rise to questions of the most delicate and difficult character within the membership of the Church.

Should a master who became a Christian set his slaves free? Should a slave who accepted Christ demand his liberty? How should Christian masters and slaves be related to one another?

Not unnaturally, therefore, when Paul has instructed Timothy as to the duty of the pastor toward the various classes in his congregation, he turns last of all to tell him of the conduct which he is to enjoin upon Christian slaves.

He deals first with those who have unbelieving masters Such are not to be insolent or unruly. They are not to insist upon social equality or political freedom. They are not to foment strife and revolution. Such lawlessness and violence on the part of Christians would bring disgrace upon the name of God and upon his gospel: "Let as many as are servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed."

An equally great temptation would confront slaves when their masters became Christians. They would be assured of their equality before God, and of their common brotherhood in Christ. Presuming upon these relationships they might be inclined to show toward their masters unbecoming familiarity and contempt. Therefore Paul urges Timothy to warn such as "have believing masters" not to "despise them, because they are brethren," but on the other hand to labor even more faithfully just because the masters who would profit by this improved service

were believers and beloved and as such were worthy of fidelity and kindly regard.

Thus wisely did Paul deal with the problems which rose out of slavery, the monster evil of his day; and his teachings are invaluable to the Christian pastor who seeks light upon the most pressing problems of the present, namely, upon those questions which rise out of our modern social and industrial and political order. What are the right relations between the white and the colored races, between labor and capital, between rulers and subjects? Surely gigantic evils exist, and cruel injustice seems to be wrought into the very fabric of our social order. What course shall the Christian follow?

We may note that Paul neither denounced slavery nor incited revolution. He taught great principles which worked slowly and surely, which abolished slavery and made for political liberty and social justice. The modern minister must proclaim human brotherhood and equality, and must seek to apply the teachings of the gospel to all human relationship; however, he is neither to incite nor to countenance violence; he is not to array class against class, nor to imagine that human welfare will be advanced by the disregard of social conventions or by the sudden overthrow of political institutions.

The social ethics of Christianity need to be widely advocated; but just how far their logical conclusions are to be pressed in any case must be determined by wisdom and common sense, and by a due regard for the rights of all parties concerned. Mutual love and consideration between man and man will make life happier and more secure under even the present social order, and no order can possibly be satisfactory or enduring unless there exists that spirit of Christian brotherhood which Paul advocated when he urged even slaves to show toward their masters fidelity and respect.

IV. Conclusion. Ch. 6: 3-21

A. False Teachers Denounced for Vanity and Avarice. Ch. 6: 3-10

3 If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain: 7 for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; 8 but having food and covering we shall be therewith content. 9 But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

In the remaining portion of the epistle, Paul reverts to two themes on which he has laid great stress in the earlier chapters, namely, the necessity of sound doctrine and of right living. While the main portion of the letter has dealt with a third topic, namely, that of church organization and its related pastoral duties, Paul dwells in this letter, as in all the Pastoral Epistles, upon the duty of a Christian minister to be sound in his teaching and to furnish in his own life an example which his congregation can safely follow.

In a real sense these closing paragraphs form a climax and a logical conclusion for all the teaching which precedes, for they emphasize the great motives by which a Christian minister should be inspired. In contrast with the false teachers who are moved by vanity and love of money, Timothy is to seek for holiness and to be inspired by the hope of his Lord's return.

In referring to the false teachers, who were causing such trouble to the church at Ephesus, Paul describes them as

teaching "a different doctrine." He thus again suggests that there is a divine standard of truth, even the gospel which has been revealed through Christ. It is this gospel which Paul further defines as consisting of "sound words," and further describes as being "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," and further still, as "the doctrine which is according to godliness," that is, the doctrine which teaches and develops and results in true piety.

The first motive which Paul ascribes to one who teaches such a "different doctrine" is that of vanity. Paul describes such a teacher as both proud and ignorant: "he is puffed up, knowing nothing." He has a morbid appetite for idle discussions and quarrels about words, "doting about questionings and disputes of words." These heretics are thus described as wasting time in mere academic disputes. Unfortunately this disease has never been confined to heretics, and even the most orthodox teachers have been tempted to wage such wars of words. It should be remembered, however, that by the ignorant the discussion of even vital questions is frequently regarded as a mere battle about words, as the consideration of essential Christian truths seemed to the mind of Greek philosophers to be of this futile nature.

As to such really empty and vain disputes, Paul states that their only result will be "envy, strife, railings." He declares that these feuds characterize "men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth." The last phrase indicates that the truth was once theirs, but it has been lost. They "have disinherited themselves." Their chief error consists in regarding the profession of Christianity as a means of financial profit, "supposing that godliness is a way of gain." Paul at once adds, "But godliness with contentment is great gain," and here he lifts the word "gain" even as he does the word "godliness" to a higher sense. He means that true piety, and not an empty profession of faith, is a way of securing the very highest good and not mere earthly treasure; but he adds a very significant clause, the "godliness" which "is great gain" must be accompanied "with contentment." The last is a word of large meaning. It denotes independence of any lot, and the

ability of finding resources in oneself, and in being indifferent to everything else besides. It does not indicate mere satisfaction with what one possesses, but a satisfaction wholly disconnected with all outward circumstances. Paul gives a reason for this statement in the phrase which follows: "for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out"; that is, nothing the world can give makes any real addition to the man himself; his real good consists in his moral and spiritual being, not in any wealth or possessions he may gather about him. Paul further adds, "Having food and covering we shall be therewith content"; whatever else may be granted may be received with thanks; it may be useful and add comfort. It is not, however, absolutely necessary, and the true Christian will be satisfied when his needs are supplied.

Paul, however, is not praising poverty, nor declaring it a crime to possess property; he is only rebuking avarice, and showing that real contentment is independent of either poverty or wealth.

It is against the peril of avarice that he proceeds to warn Timothy, and through him all religious teachers, and, indeed, all the followers of Christ. "They that are minded to be rich," that is, those who place before them wealth as the chief goal in life, "fall into a temptation," namely, that of using wrong means for accomplishing their ends, "and a snare," so that they find themselves enmeshed in a net of circumstances from which they cannot extricate themselves without the loss either of honor or of money. Then, as riches increase, they tend to develop many "foolish and hurtful lusts," that is, the desire for unreasonable and injurious pleasures and gratifications which overwhelm men in moral ruin, or, as Paul declares, "drown men in destruction and perdition."

Such a downward course of those who have yielded to avarice has been observed only too frequently, in the case of men within as well as outside the Church. Paul emphasizes his warning, however, by the statement that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." He does not speak disparagingly of money, for it may be an instrument of all kinds of good, but of the "love of money," the lust

of gold, the passion for gain, out of which evil of every kind may spring. Nor does he mean that avarice is the only passion out of which such deadly fruit may grow, but that it is a motive, which, if allowed to take root in the heart, will be prolific of evils of every kind.

Then Paul adds that there are some persons, even within the number of professing Christians, who because of their "reaching after" money have made shipwreck both of their faith and of their happiness, they "have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Just what these sorrows are, Paul leaves the reader to conclude. Evidently he intends to suggest the poignant griefs of one whom conscience torments for disgraceful efforts to secure wordly gain, or the final disillusionment of one who has made gold his god.

B. TIMOTHY SOLEMNLY EXHORTED. Ch. 6: 11-16

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses. 13 I charge thee in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession; 14 that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 15 which in its own times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honor and power eternal. Amen.

The supreme concern of the Christian pastor must ever be that of the purity and sanctity of his own motives. Thus when Paul has warned Timothy against the vanity and avarice which controlled the false teachers in Ephesus, he brings his epistle to a climax in a solemn charge to shun these evils and earnestly to seek the things of the highest good, not to set his heart upon selfish and worldly gain, but to be looking for "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul appeals to Timothy as a "man of God," using a

phrase commonly employed in the Old Testament to designate a prophet; but he does not mean to describe Timothy technically as a Christian minister, but possibly to remind him that he has been entrusted with a divine message; and the exhortation which follows is surely applicable to all who are true servants of God.

"Flee these things," that is, the pride, the vanity, and the avarice of the false teachers. Instead of their use of religion as a means of gain, Timothy is to strive earnestly for a character pleasing to God and for that true piety by which alone such a character can be produced.

If the false teachers "have been led astray from the faith" by their love of money, Timothy is to maintain that devotion to Christ which manifests itself in deeds of love. If they have been led into bitterness and wrangling, Timothy must manifest patience and meekness.

He is exhorted to "fight the good fight of the faith." Here Paul uses words which refer to the ancient Greek games, and he pictures the Christian life as a "contest," noble, indeed, in contrast with the physical struggles of the arena, a contest in which victory can be secured only by faith in Christ, and in which the prize is nothing less than life eternal.

To the enjoyment of this life here and hereafter, Timothy was "called" at the time he accepted Christ, and when he confessed "the good confession in the sight of many witnesses." From the reference to this "good confession" which Timothy made in earlier days, Paul passes naturally to exhort Timothy to continue steadfast in the present trials through which he is passing and in which he is surrounded by witnesses whose real but unseen presence will strengthen him to be faithful and true.

Paul charges Timothy "in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things," that is, in the sight of the One who is the Source or Preserver of all beings, and who will therefore protect and deliver Timothy, however great the perils which may surround him.

He charges him further in the presence of "Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession," that Timothy, also, may be fearless and uncompromising

in his witness to the truth. The exact "charge," however, Paul now specifies: "That thou keep the commandment without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." By "the commandment" Paul means the whole moral content of the gospel. This Timothy must keep "without spot, without reproach," by his own observance of it in his life and conduct, quite as much as by his open proclamation of its truth.

In a strict sense nothing can affect the "commandment"; it will always be "without spot, without reproach"; yet, practically, the divine message may suffer and be brought into disrepute by the faulty lives of Christian ministers. Those who preach the gospel must adorn the doctrine by their lives. Thus, while the terms "spotless" and "blameless" literally define "the commandment," in reality it is Timothy who is to be "unspotted" and "free from reproach," lest the message he delivers may be disregarded and despised.

This unblemished life is to be lived, "the commandment" is to be kept, "until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is a clear reference to the return of Christ, or the Second Advent, by which is meant no mere spiritual influence upon men, nor the moral development of society, but an actual, visible, personal manifestation, the glorious "appearing of our Lord."

Paul does not mean, however, that Timothy of necessity will live until that day; but this event is to be regarded as one which might occur in his lifetime, and is ever to be regarded as an inspiring hope. Paul never affirms that the event is near. In his earliest letters he specifically taught that an apostasy would first develop and a "man of sin" appear. II Thess. 2 : 3. How long the delay may be is never foretold. As stated here, this return of Christ was to be "in its own times," known to God alone.

It was for Timothy, as it is the privilege of every subsequent generation of believers, to find in the hope of "the appearing of our Lord" an incentive to fidelity in service and to purity of life.

The solemn exhortation now melts into the music of a glorious doxology. He who in due season is to bring to

pass the return of Christ is described as "the blessed and only Potentate," the One who enjoys perfect bliss and absolute sovereignty, "King of kings and Lord of lords." He "only hath immortality," essential and underived, "dwelling in light unapproachable" because of its brilliance and splendor, "whom no man hath seen nor can see," as his glory is revealed to men only in the face of Jesus Christ. To this blessed, sovereign, majestic, everlasting, invisible God, is ascribed "honor and power eternal."

Amidst all the dark and abounding idolatries of earth, the Christian Church should sound out more widely the glad, good news embodied in this majestic hymn of praise to the one true and living God.

C. POSTSCRIPT. Ch. 6: 17-19

1. An Admonition to the Rich. Ch. 6 : 17-19

17 Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is *life* indeed.

The modern minister needs to be on his guard lest he may deal unwisely with the problems related to wealth. The present social and industrial order does involve injustice and distressing inequalities. Nevertheless, a Christian leader must be careful not to deny the right of private property or to intimate that a man is sinful or dangerous because he is rich.

Neither Christ nor Paul ever condemned rich men because they were rich, but only because they put their trust in wealth or failed to use it aright. Thus, when Paul is writing the closing paragraphs of this letter, he pauses to give an admonition to the rich. He has, in this very chapter, given a solemn warning against avarice, and particularly against the avarice of religious teachers; here he is making an advance upon his thought, for he is addressing wealthy Christians, and is warning them against putting a false confidence in their riches, and is urging them to make a wise use of their wealth.

When he tells Timothy to "charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded," he is referring to members of the Church. Evidently there were among them men of wealth, owners of slaves, v. 2, possessors of large means. This is the sense of the phrase, "rich in this present world"; the contrast is not between spiritual and material riches, but between the rich and the poor in worldly goods. Those who are possessors of ma-

terial goods are not urged to sell them or to give them up, but are charged not to be "highminded," that is, proud, for pride of purse is "not merely vulgar, it is sinful" nor are they to trust in riches, or to set their hopes upon them, for these so often take wings and fly away, as Paul implies by his expression, "the uncertainty of riches," which is a strong way of saying "riches, which are uncertain."

In contrast to such an insecure foundation for our hopes and confidence, Paul declares that our trust is to be in God "who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." Riches are therefore a real good, if rightly used. For they are given by God, who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and they are intended not only to be possessed but to be enjoyed.

However, rightful ownership and real enjoyment must be united with a proper use of wealth. Therefore, Timothy is to charge his wealthy parishioners to "do good," to be "rich in good works," which, after all, constitute the truest wealth, "ready to distribute," that is, to share their blessings with others. The result of such a generous, unselfish, helpful use of wealth will be the "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come," that is, this true garnering of the wealth of good deeds will supply for them a solid foundation for the future, and will enable them to grasp and enjoy the prize of eternal life, or to "lay hold on the life which is life indeed." While some of these phrases are so condensed and figurative as to allow some latitude of interpretation, nevertheless the main meaning is plain and accords perfectly with the teaching of our Master as to the stewardship of wealth, its uncertain tenure, and its possible use to "lay up . . . treasures in heaven."

2. A Final Charge to Timothy. Ch. 6: 20, 21a

20 O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto *thee,* turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called: 21 which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

It has been noted properly that this last charge to Timothy is in large measure a summary of the whole epistle.

It is a solemn reminder that the gospel must be guarded against the assaults of false teachers. It intimates to the Christian minister that the truth committed to his trust, while continually in peril of being corrupted by proud advocates of heresy, must ever be preserved with fidelity and boldness, even as it must be proclaimed with love.

This last mention of Timothy, by name, gives a solemn tone to the warning, and makes it more emphatic, as a personal address. "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee." This "deposit," to quote the exact word employed by Paul, this "which is committed" to Timothy, can be nothing else than the Christian creed, the faith of the Church, the gospel of Christ. It is likened to a treasure entrusted to a bank for safe-keeping.

As an ancient writer maintained, this gospel message is one which has been "committed" to the ministers of the Church, not invented by them; which they have received, not which they have devised; a thing not of wit but of learning; not of private assumption but of public tradition; a thing brought to them, not brought forth of them, wherein they must be not authors but keepers, not founders but observers, not leaders but followers. "Wherefore," he concludes, as he addresses a particular pastor, "in such sort deliver the same things which thou has learnt, that albeit thou teachest after a new manner, yet thou never teach new things."

Therefore Timothy is to "guard" the apostolic gospel as a sacred trust which he has received from Paul, which he must keep safe and intact, and which he must transmit to the church at Ephesus, and through these believers to those who shall come after.

In order that he may succeed in this difficult task, he must turn away from the irreverent and empty babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge." Paul refers to the heresies already rife in the Ephesian church, which consisted largely of puerile and profitless intellectual subtleties and allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament law, and were definitely contrasted with the practical morality of the gospel as proclaimed by Paul. He is insisting here that a professed knowledge of God, on

the part of those who do not love him and submit to his will, is really no "knowledge" at all. Such mere idle speculation has no real power; and therefore Paul adds that some who professed such knowledge "have erred," or "missed the mark," "concerning the faith." They have been aiming in the wrong direction. Real religion is not a matter of logical subtleties but the application of truth to life.

3. Benediction. Ch. 6: 21b

Grace be with you.

The benediction, "Grace be with you," is a characteristic ending for the letters of Paul. The "grace" he invokes is elsewhere expressed as "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"; it is that unmerited favor upon which all believers need to rely, and especially those who are serving as pastors of the flock.

The word "you" is plural, and, while in Greek correspondence this was often used in reference to an individual, it is commonly supposed that Paul had in mind here the whole church at Ephesus, and thus indicates that these Pastoral Epistles were not intended to bear merely personal instructions to the pastor addressed, but guidance for the whole society of believers. Thus, to-day, while the first message of these letters may come to Christian pastors, no member of the flock can read them thoughtfully and prayerfully without finding guidance and strength, and a new share in the grace of Christ.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

The Second Epistle written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy is the most personal of the Pastoral Epistles. Possibly no other of the New Testament letters makes so tender and so pathetic an appeal. Every paragraph is suffused with emotion, every sentence throbs with the pulse beats of a human heart. Paul, the dauntless missionary hero, the founder of the Church in Asia Minor and in Europe, is now an aged prisoner in Rome, suffering, deserted, despised, condemned, and soon to be led forth to a cruel death. In his previous captivity he had been allowed to dwell in his own hired house, to converse freely with his friends, and to direct his wide missionary work; now he is chained in a dark dungeon, he is distressed with the cold, he is absolutely alone save for one faithful friend, Luke, "the beloved physician," to whom, probably, he is dictating this moving message of farewell.

Yet in another sense Paul is not alone. To the eye of imagination his prison cell is crowded with a throng of saints and heroes and sufferers of all the ages down to the present day. The number is almost countless of those who know what it is to suffer imprisonment, or to be racked with pain, or to be discouraged and lonely and shadowed by the approach of death; but their faces grow bright with cheer and their hearts bound with new hope and their fears are dissolved as they hear the apostle speaking, not to Luke alone but to all who are in distress and who in the darkness put their trust in Christ; and the gloom disappears and the scene is flooded with glory as Paul utters his triumphant words: "I know him whom I have believed. . . . I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day. . . . The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom."

The immediate purpose of the letter is to summon to his side Timothy, his beloved friend and the companion of his long missionary journeys. In the darkness and dreariness of his imprisonment, Paul not unnaturally longed for the comforting fellowship of one who was as dear to him as his own soul, his beloved, and faithful child in the Lord, one who so long had served with him as a son with a father.

For Timothy, as well as for Paul, these are times of trouble and testing, of deep anxiety, even of discouragement and of fear. He has been appointed by Paul as the superintending pastor of the great mission at Ephesus. By nature he is timid and sensitive, and he is painfully conscious that he is unequal to the difficult work to which he has been sent. The days are growing even darker; not only are there false teachers within the Church who are seeking to corrupt its doctrine, but from without, persecutors and bitter enemies are threatening the very existence of the infant society. The cruelties of Nero are at their height. The heartless emperor has set fire to Rome and has turned the popular suspicion and anger against the Christians who are everywhere spoken against, suspected, hated, and oppressed. At such a time we can imagine how Timothy would rejoice if he could have the presence and counsel and encouragement of Paul; but on the contrary he learns that the friend he adores has been seized by enemies and imprisoned and is about to die.

However, we may imagine what comfort and new strength come to Timothy as he reads the promises and the affectionate exhortations of this little letter. We can also realize in part how far this letter now has come and to how many pastors distressed by distracting cares, to how many missionaries surrounded by unsympathetic multitudes and sinking beneath crushing burdens, to how many other faithful Christians torn by anxiety for the welfare of their work, have these chapters come to dispel the clouds, to strengthen faith, to stimulate zeal, to give peace and confidence in hours of trial and even in the face of death. To them, also, as well as to Timothy, comes the

exhortation to suffer hardship as good soldiers of Christ and the promise that "if we endure, we shall also reign with him."

However, as we read this letter, it becomes evident that Paul is not concerned for himself alone, nor yet for Timothy, his beloved friend, but for the Christian Church which is so dear to their hearts and for which Paul was ready to pour out his life. The apostle feels deep anxiety for its pure doctrine and for its consistent life, and therefore as he writes he urges Timothy to perfect its organization and to commit its beliefs "to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also," and this with a view to withstanding the influences of false teachers whose corrupt doctrines are resulting in unholy lives and are indicating that for the Church even more grievous times are to come.

Therefore, to all who love the Church of Christ, the message of this epistle will be precious, for it contains the last will and testament of the apostle; it conveys his farewell warning and advice. It indicates the need of appointing, as official witnesses, men who proclaim a pure gospel, in order that consistent character may be developed and that the coming and Kingdom of Christ may be hastened. "The substance of the epistle is just this: Be not ashamed; be brave, be faithful to the truth as I have been. Oppose the false teachers. Come to me, for I am alone and soon to die." The exhortations are at once too informal, too diverse, and too fervent to admit of any rigid classification, but the following outline may aid somewhat in appreciating the message of this the last letter which has come from the Apostle Paul:

I. Introduction. II Tim. 1 : 1-5.
   A. Salutation. Ch. 1 : 1, 2.
   B. Thanksgiving. Ch. 1 : 3-5.
II. Exhortations to Steadfastness in Service. Chs. 1 · 6 to 2 : 13.
   A. To Zeal and Courage: The Example of Paul. Ch. 1 : 6-12.
   B. To Fidelity and Loyalty: The Example of Onesiphorus. Ch. 1 : 13-18.

C. To Transmit the Truth, and to Endure Hardship for Its Sake. Ch. 2 : 1-13.
III. Exhortations to Sound Doctrine. Chs. 2 : 14 to 4 : 8.
A. The Evil Influence of False Teaching. Ch. 2:14-26
B. The Difficult Days Ahead. Ch. 3.
C. Paul's Approaching Death. Ch. 4 : 1-8.
IV. Conclusion. Ch. 4 : 9-22.
A. Personal Matters. Ch. 4 : 9-18.
B. Salutation and Benediction. Ch. 4 : 19-22.

I. Introduction. II Tim. 1 : 1-5

A. SALUTATION. Ch. 1: 1, 2

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus, 2 to Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thus for the last time Paul addresses his dear young friend, Timothy; thus he begins that matchless farewell which has cheered countless readers in all ages of the Christian Church.

To us of the present day, and in the Western world, there may seem to be something of formality and of coldness in a greeting which the writer begins with the mention of his own name. We remember, however, that this was as fixed a custom in the days of Paul as it is for us to place signatures at the close of our letters. No name of more thrilling significance could have been written. Its mere mention summons before us vividly one of the most striking personalities in the history of the world, a master mind, a soul of almost infinite capacity for joy and grief, for hope and pain, for friendship and for faith.

So well do we know him, so familiar are we with the fact that he is now opening his last message, that we instinctively feel he is here calling us to listen to his words.

There is something official in the title by which he describes himself: "Paul, an apostle"; he intends to convey an intimation of authority; he is about to write a pastoral epistle—not a personal note, but a letter to a minister who is in charge of an important church, who needs encouragement and counsel and, also, a deepening conviction of the dignity and importance of his task. However, the personal element in the letter is to be supreme, and this is foreshadowed by the phrase which Paul adds to the name of Timothy, to whom he is writing. He calls him his "beloved child." It is this phrase which gives a special note of

tenderness to the salutation and prepares us for the messages which follow, as Paul pours out his whole heart to the companion who had not only shared his greatest trials and triumphs, but also long had enjoyed such affection as a father bestows upon a son; and now Timothy is being summoned to the side of the great apostle, to whom he owes his spiritual life, that he may bring comfort and cheer and receive from him a tender last farewell.

The name, however, which makes this salutation differ from those of most letters, ancient and modern, and which gives it at once its significance and its dignity, is that neither of Paul nor of Timothy but of "Christ Jesus." We note the order of the words. Other apostles speak of "Jesus Christ"; Paul alone, and usually, speaks of "Christ Jesus." Just what this difference implies, it may be unwise to insist. Originally the word "Jesus" was a personal name, and "Christ" an official title; in the course of time, these terms were interchanged rather freely; Jesus had proved to be the Christ, and the Christ had been known among men as Jesus of Nazareth. However, while the other apostles had known their Master first as a man and later as a Messiah, it may be that for this reason they called him Jesus Christ, while Paul, whose first vision was of the glorified Lord, always thought of him as the divine Christ who had borne the human name of Jesus, and whom Paul loved and adored as Christ Jesus.

Whichever term we may employ, the lesson for us is plain: that we should never regard our Master merely as a man, but, first and last, should reverence him and love him as the Christ, crucified, risen, glorified, divine.

Three times in the brief compass of this salutation Paul repeats the blessed title. He calls himself "an apostle of Christ Jesus"; he speaks of "the life which is in Christ Jesus"; he prays for grace, mercy and peace "from God the Father and Christ Jesus." Possibly as we begin our letters or address ourselves to the various tasks of life, it would be helpful for us likewise to remember that we are servants of Christ, that our lives are linked with Christ, and that all our blessings flow from Christ. Surely this would give a new gladness to our most dreary days.

In the very phrase, "the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus," there is a wealth of meaning. Paul here indicates that the apostleship is due to divine appointment, for he calls himself an apostle "through the will of God," and he further declares that this appointment is in order that he may proclaim the gospel which he here calls the promise of life. This is the very essence of the good news. It offers life in all its fullness to those who submit their lives to Christ, to those who can use the word which Paul adds when for the third time he refers to "Christ Jesus" and calls him his "Lord." If Christ Jesus is our Lord, if we truly belong to him, then he imparts to us the life which is life indeed.

Much of the blessedness of this life is summed up in the prayer which Paul offers for Timothy, and which forms the real substance of this salutation: "Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." Only in his letters to Timothy does Paul unite these three luminous terms. Elsewhere he speaks of "grace" and "peace," but here he adds "mercy," and these three together appear to include all that Paul could wish for Timothy in this world and the next; and yet, the enjoyment of all that they signify is for everyone whose hope and trust are in "God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."

B. THANKSGIVING Ch. 1:3-5

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day 4 longing to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; 5 having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also.

As is usual in beginning his letters, Paul follows the opening salutation with a thanksgiving and a prayer. Here the thanksgiving is for the faith of Timothy, and the petition is that Timothy may be restored to Paul. The thanksgiving and the prayer, as in other letters, are closely entwined, and they are expressed in a sentence

which is somewhat difficult to understand because the phrases are so condensed and because their exact relation is not easy to discover. The meaning is in substance as follows: "I thank the God of my fathers, whom I also worship with a pure conscience, that I unceasingly remember you in my prayers. When I remember the tears you shed at our parting, night and day I long to see you again, that I may be filled with joy. I am grateful at receiving a reminder of your sincere faith, a faith which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and in your mother Eunice, as it dwells, I know, in you."

In these words Paul indicates the preciousness of Christian faith and the pricelessness of Christian friendship. He feels that this faith is the same as that which animated his fathers before him, the same which dwelt in the heart of Timothy and had inspired his grandmother and his mother. Christianity and Judaism in the mind of Paul were not distinct religions; the former was an outgrowth of the latter. It was its fulfillment, its culmination, its glory. The faith of their Jewish parents, Paul regarded as not different in kind from that which was exercised by Timothy and by himself. Faith is submission to God and dependence upon him and love for him. Faith accepts what God reveals and the revelation through the prophets finds its climax and its completeness in Jesus Christ.

However, when Paul uses the words, "from my forefathers," in connection with his worship and religious service, he means not only that he worships the God of his ancestors and worships as they worshiped, but also that it is to them that he owes his religious faith. He is intimating the same in reference to Timothy. He intimates that Timothy's faith is due to the influence of Lois and Eunice, his grandmother and his mother. He is thus reminding us that faith can be communicated, that family religion is a matter of supreme importance, and that an inheritance of godly traditions and religious instincts is a blessed possession. Paul tells us both of the responsibilities and of the privileges of parents. He points us also to the grounds for gratitude in the hearts of children. He intimates that our faith is usually a gift which we owe to others. Most of all,

he emphasizes the value of this gift. It was because of the faith of Timothy that Paul was thankful to remember him, was thankful that he remembered him unceasingly. It was because of the faith of Timothy that Paul so longed to see him. It was the manifestation of this faith that had made Timothy so dear to the apostle and that made Paul certain that the presence of his friend would bring cheer and comfort even in the dreary dungeon at Rome.

It is thus the picture of a Christian friendship which is presented to us in these touching words, as the epistle opens. The aged apostle intimates that even those who differ far in age, in attainment, and in disposition, can be closely knit together in the indissoluble bonds of true love. It was this affection that made Paul long, night and day, for the presence of his young friend. He knew that his love was returned; he remembered how Timothy had wept when they had been torn apart, possibly on the occasion of Paul's arrest; and now that the shadows of death are deepening around him, Paul sends this tender message to express his devotion, to cheer Timothy in his difficulties, but supremely, to summon Timothy to his side. It was a Christian friendship which gave to the world this matchless letter of farewell.

II. Exhortations to Steadfastness in Service. Chs. 1 : 6 to 2 : 13

A. To Zeal and Courage: The Example of Paul. Ch. 1: 6-12

6 For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline. 8 Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; 9 who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, 10 but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 whereunto I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher. 12 For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day.

The immediate purpose of Paul in writing this epistle is to summon Timothy to Rome; however, his larger design is to prepare Timothy for the approaching death of his beloved leader and to encourage Timothy to be faithful to his task as pastor of the great church at Ephesus.

Accordingly, when he has expressed his gratitude for the sincerity and devotion of Timothy and his own longing to see him, Paul opens his message with a comprehensive charge, urging Timothy to zeal in his pastoral work and to the fullest use of that spiritual equipment which has been given him for public service, or as Paul expresses it, "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee."

He bases this appeal on the double ground of the faith Timothy has shown and of the gift he has received. The reality and purity of that faith Paul never doubts or questions. He knows that it has been transmitted to his young

friend from a godly mother and grandmother, and that this faith has only grown more firm and clear since it has centered upon Christ as a Saviour and Lord.

The usefulness of Timothy is not endangered by doubt; his peril lies in timidity and self-consciousness and fear. This has always been his temptation, and now it will become the more serious when death has robbed him of his inspiring leader, when opposition to the Christian sect has grown more bitter, when false teachers within the Church have become more bold.

For this reason Paul reminds Timothy not only of the faith which has never failed him but also of the special grace for service that God has given him. The reception of this gift Paul connects with the time when Timothy was ordained to the ministry. From the references here and in the former epistle, it would seem that in view of the high qualifications possessed by Timothy and of his predicted usefulness, Paul had united with the members of the presbytery in laying hands upon Timothy and in thus appointing him to his sacred office. It seems, further, that as Timothy yielded himself to the service of Christ, the Spirit of the Master imparted to him special equipment for his task. The result of this divine influence, as Paul here declares, was not a spirit of timidity, but of strength and of love which casts out fear, and of the self-discipline which overcomes weakness and gives confidence in action.

Therefore, in face of new difficulties, being reminded of the experiences of his ordination hour, Timothy is encouraged to draw upon those stores of grace which by the power of the Holy Spirit ever were at his command.

Timothy was not the last Christian minister by whom this exhortation has been needed. Many of his successors to-day should heed the exhortation to "stir up," or to rekindle, or to fan into a flame, the gifts that are in them. Lack of zeal in the Christian ministry may be due to discouragement, to doubt, to the dull monotony of toil, or to timidity and fear. However, such zeal may be aroused by appealing to the same fact which Paul here mentions. Every public servant of Christ may be reminded helpfully of the faith which he has inherited from a godly ancestry,

and which has to the present dwelt in his soul. He may also remember the ordination by which he was set aside for his sacred work.

For we regard this service both as a recognition of inherent gifts, and also as appointment to an office; but further, we believe that in this solemn hour, as a candidate yields himself anew to the service of Christ, he is granted by the Holy Spirit a special equipment for his high calling. The gift is not magical, not miraculous, not mystical, but it is none the less real, and in many future hours of difficulty he can gain new heart as he remembers that the Spirit who is ever with him will grant him all needed grace.

However, this message as to the need of using the gifts which God grants is for all the followers of Christ, whatever their special task or sphere in life. There is always a danger of neglecting opportunities, of burying talents, and of allowing spiritual fervor to be quenched. Much more would be accomplished for Christ and for those about us if we were not held back by fear of failure, by timidity and dread of criticism; but our hearts can ever be strengthened as we remember that Christ who summons us to his service is ever ready to grant us by his Spirit the wisdom and the strength which we need.

In view of the spiritual equipment which God has given him, Timothy is urged not to be ashamed either of his testimony for Christ or of Paul who has been imprisoned for his loyalty to Christ; but rather to endure bravely the hardships which may be involved in preaching the gospel.

For such endurance Timothy can rely upon the power of God who has revealed his grace in the great salvation which he has provided through Christ Jesus. He has secured deliverance from the guilt and power of sin and has brought us into a holy life, not in view of any merit of our own, but because of his gracious purpose formed in eternity and manifested in time "by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

This, then, was the assurance given to Timothy that if God, in absolute grace, has called us to a new life of consecration, and has promised us a future life of glory, he cer-

tainly will give us power and protection in our present acts of service.

The declaration that Christ Jesus has "abolished death" means not only that he overcame death and made it of no effect in his own resurrection, but also that for his followers he has taken from death its "sting," its "fear," and its "power." The sting of death consisted in the consciousness that it was the consequence of sin. The Christian knows, however, that he is not under condemnation and that for him death is not the penalty for personal guilt. The fear of death had kept all the human race in a bondage of dread; but for the Christian the king of terrors has become a slave; he is clad indeed in a livery of black, but he is sent to draw back the curtains of mystery and to lead the follower of Christ into the spacious chambers of the Father's house.

Death once had the power of hopeless destruction; now it is known that death some day must relinquish all that for a time he is allowed to claim, and that even the grave is to lose its temporary victory.

As Paul adds, "life" in all its fullness, life for time and eternity, and an "immortality" of deathless "incorruption" have been brought to light through the gospel. Paul does not mean that such "life" and "immortality" were unknown before; they had been vaguely discerned; but upon them the gospel has thrown a flood of light. Before, they were dim hopes, but now the gospel of Christ has made them stand out in all the splendor of bright realities.

Surely no one needs to be ashamed of such a gospel, and thus Paul further encourages Timothy by declaring how gladly he himself is suffering as a bearer of such good news, and with fearlessness is now looking into the face of death.

"For which cause," that is, because of my loyalty to the gospel, "I suffer also these things"—these chains, this dungeon, this darkness, this desertion, this loneliness, this hatred: "yet I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day."

The sacred "deposit" to which Paul refers is taken some-

times as a reference to the gospel which God has entrusted to him and which Paul believes will be divinely guarded until Christ himself returns. Such is the meaning of the same Greek word in the next verse but one, and also in the next to the last verse in the preceding letter; and such an interpretation is full of significance.

More commonly, however, this "deposit" is taken as indicating the soul of Paul, his life, all that he has and is. In the light which the gospel throws upon life and immortality, even as he stands under the very shadow of approaching death, Paul has no fear; he knows that he will be safely guarded even unto the day of the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

Such a blessed assurance belongs to all the followers of Christ; they share it with Paul, and because of this confidence, they too rejoice in the gospel and are inclined to steadfast service, and are triumphant over fear, and live in the light of deathless hope.

B. TO FIDELITY AND LOYALTY: THE EXAMPLE OF ONESIPHORUS. Ch. 1: 13-18

13 Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14 That good thing which was committed unto *thee* guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us.

15 This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16 The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus: for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 17 but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me 18 (the Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day); and in how many things he ministered at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

In opening this letter, Paul has already warned Timothy against being ashamed either of the gospel he is preaching or of his friend who for the sake of the gospel is now a prisoner at Rome. This warning forms the substance of the two paragraphs with which this first chapter closes. The first of them, vs. 13, 14, urges Timothy faithfully to preserve the truth of the gospel, and the second, vs. 15-18, encourages him to be loyal in his friendship for Paul.

The former of these is in substance a double exhortation. It consists of two parallel commands. In the first, it is insisted that Timothy must hold carefully, as a pattern or outline of the Christian faith, the sound teaching which he has received from Paul. In the second, he is told to guard the sacred treasure of the truth which has been committed to his trust. In the first case, this fidelity is declared to be possible by maintaining the "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." In the second case, the deposit is to be guarded in the power of "the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us."

As Paul uses the phrase, "pattern of sound words," he implies that his own teaching has been merely an outline, or brief summary, of the truths which the gospel contains, but that this outline is free from error and must be faith-

fully held and proclaimed. He further indicates that such an outline may be expanded and that other statements of the truth will be helpful, but they must be in accordance with the beliefs which Paul himself has set forth in the gospel message committed to Timothy. Still further he indicates that this revealed truth must be held "in faith and love." That is, it must be accepted with the heart and expressed in life and conduct; and, further, must be proclaimed and defended with the charity and gentleness which become a follower of Christ.

In his parallel command, Paul describes the gospel as a "deposit," a treasure which has been committed to Timothy as a sacred trust. It is neither to be lost nor destroyed, nor is its beauty to be marred by hostile hands. In the presence of false teachers and in view of the prevalence of unsound doctrine, Timothy is assured that to safeguard the gospel he needs divine aid. He must depend upon the grace and strength which will be afforded him by the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

The need of such commands has never ceased. In all ages of the Church the gospel has been endangered both by false friends and by open enemies. The form of its statement may sometimes differ, but its every proclamation should conform to "the pattern" given to the Church by the apostle. At times it must be stoutly defended; and this can best be done by those whose faith is accompanied by love; and surely these virtues are gifts of "the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us"; only by his power and wisdom shall we be able to guard "that good thing" which has been committed to us by Christ Jesus. To-day he is calling not only his ordained ministers but also all of his followers to guard the sacred treasure of revealed truth "in faith and love."

In order that Timothy may be strengthened in his loyalty, Paul gives two examples, one of warning and the other of encouragement. The first is that of the false friends who have deserted him; the second is of Onesiphorus, whose devotion Timothy well knows. There is something pathetic in the words of the lonely apostle, "all that are in Asia turned away from me." Just who these

were, it is impossible to learn. There is something of pardonable exaggeration in the term, "all . . . in Asia." Paul is referring to former friends in Roman Asia, in the small province which occupied only a fraction of what is now known as Asia Minor; but even there Paul still has loyal friends; for it was in Ephesus, the capital city, that Timothy, to whom this letter is written, is presiding over his important church. It is evident, however, that many of these professed Christians have proved false to Paul in the hour of his need. Some have thought that this desertion was at the time when Paul was arrested; others have felt that the apostle must have written from Rome asking in vain for sympathy and help from these former followers. The circumstances are obscure, but the fact is clear, that the heart of the aged apostle was saddened by the consciousness that those upon whom he had relied proved faithless when their friendship was most needed. Among these Paul mentions two, Phygelus and Hermogenes. They are not named elsewhere in the New Testament, but they have attained an immortality of disgrace by their defection from the great apostle of Christ.

In striking contrast Paul names Onesiphorus, evidently another member of the Ephesian church, a man who, while Paul was still in that city, rendered to him repeated services of love, and who later, when Paul had been imprisoned in Rome, made a diligent search until he discovered the apostle in his dungeon; and then, instead of being ashamed of the deserted and despised leader, frequently "refreshed" him, both in relieving his necessities and by comforting him with his companionship and love. As Paul reminds Timothy of this devotion and loyalty, he utters the hope that the Lord will grant mercy to the family of this faithful friend, and that to the friend himself mercy would be shown in the day of the Lord's return. This latter hope as expressed by Paul has been taken by a large portion of the Christian Church as a warrant for the practice of offering "prayers for the dead." The latter is a subject which must be approached with caution and with reverence; yet it would seem that the custom has no firm support here, nor elsewhere in Scripture. In the first place,

it is by no means certain that Onesiphorus was dead. He was separated from his family; he had recently been in Rome, but quite probably he was at this time on his homeward journey to Ephesus. Then, in the second place, the hope or desire expressed by Paul, even if regarded as a prayer, was by no means of the character of those petitions which are commonly offered for the dead. It did not regard the present condition of his friend, nor his experience in the mysteries of the life which lies beyond our human vision. It concerned only the time of the return of Christ, and expressed the hope that the loyal friend of the apostle would then be fully rewarded for his fidelity and his care. We are certain that our loved ones depart to be with Christ, and in the perfect blessedness of his glorious presence they can hardly be in need of our petitions; and, further, if to pray for the departed were our task, or even our privilege, it seems probable that Scripture would contain some more definite encouragement, some more clear command.

While this paragraph may not encourage prayers for the dead, it surely must have warned Timothy against the false friendship which endures only in times of prosperity and popularity, and then withers before the first breath of hardship or suffering or disgrace. It further reminds us of the value of true friendships as we see how dependent upon the ministry and sympathy of those who were dear to his heart even the great apostle felt himself to be.

C. TO TRANSMIT THE TRUTH, AND TO ENDURE HARDSHIP FOR ITS SAKE. Ch. 2: 1-13

1 Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 3 Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. 5 And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully. 6 The husbandman that laboreth must be the first to partake of the fruits. 7 Consider what I say; for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things. 8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel: 9 wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but the word of God is not bound. 10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 11 Faithful is the saying: For if we died with him, we shall also live with him: 12 if we endure, we shall also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will deny us: 13 if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself.

Paul is still encouraging Timothy to steadfastness in his Christian service, as here in the first and second verses of this chapter he gives a comprehensive exhortation and also a specific command.

This exhortation is based upon the motives to which Paul has been appealing in the first chapter of the epistle. In view of the faith of Timothy, and of his gift for service, and of the glory of the gospel, and of the encouraging example of Paul, and of the heroic devotion of Onesiphorus, Timothy is urged to be strong, to be brave, to be steadfast: "Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Thus Timothy is turned to Christ and directed to seek from him the divine help which he is ready to bestow. If Timothy will depend upon Christ, he

will gain all needed grace, a gift unmerited but also unlimited. Thus for all the followers of Christ, both those who bear the responsibility of public service and those whose spheres of labor may be most obscure, there is offered an exhaustless supply of grace. By it they can be strengthened, not merely as passive recipients, but as they eagerly seek divine help and earnestly appropriate it to meet their needs.

This exhortation is followed by a specific command to commit the gospel as a sacred trust to reliable teachers, who in turn will hand it on to others, and thus secure its preservation and its proclamation for succeeding generations. In describing this sacred trust which he is to hand on to others, Paul reminds Timothy that he himself had received this trust from the apostle in the presence of "many witnesses." The reference seems to be to the time when Timothy was ordained to the ministry. Then, in the presence of the presbyters and others who may have been present, this treasure had been committed, in a solemn service, to the care of the young messenger. Paul is now reminding him that it is his duty to select faithful men, who under the direction of Timothy will likewise be ordained to the gospel ministry.

The "faithful men" to whom the truth is to be thus entrusted are evidently the "bishops" or "elders" or "presbyters" whom Paul has described in the previous epistle as the permanent officers of the church. This definite reference to Church organization is in accordance with the other Pastoral Letters. In First Timothy and also in Titus, as in this letter, three great themes occupy the thought of the writer. These are Church government, sound doctrine, and consistent living. The connection in which the first of these themes is mentioned here, intimates the view of Church government continually emphasized by Paul. He regards it as a matter of great importance, but it is never an end in itself. It is designed to secure the safeguarding of the sacred deposit of truth with which the Church is entrusted. It is for this reason that he commands Timothy to select men who are not only trustworthy, but well-qualified "to teach others also." This solemn responsibility

of maintaining a strong organization which will ordain faithful men to the ministry rests upon all the officers of the Christian Church, but it concerns the members as well. It is necessary that all should insist that only those men who accept the inspired teachings of the apostle and are qualified for the sacred ministry should be selected as expounders of divine truth.

As Paul continues to urge upon Timothy faithfulness in the ministerial office, he declares that hardship will be inevitable, but that reward is certain. These are the thoughts that form the substance of the verses which follow, from the third to the thirteenth. Paul indicates that every gallant achievement demands fortitude. Therefore Timothy is urged to suffer hardship "as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." He is reminded that one who is of real service to his commanding officer must be willing to disregard all ties of home or of business and to do and to dare whatever military service may demand. Paul further illustrates the necessity of self-denial and of earnest effort from the case of the athlete, who cannot win the prize unless he submits to the training, and the discipline, and the strain, which the contest involves. So, too, with the laborer who toils in the field; as a reward for his patient service, he may rightfully expect the first share in the harvest.

These three illustrations bear a message for every follower of Christ, but they have a special meaning for the Christian minister. Much is said to-day of "the strenuous life," but we do not always realize that this phrase is a fair description of a true religious experience. Some seem to forget that to follow Christ involves ceaseless effort, and struggle, and sacrifice. It is also true, however, that the compensations are incomparable and the rewards are eternal.

Most of all, is it true of the Christian minister that he is called to a life which is well pictured here in the striking parables of the apostle. He must be a soldier who is ever eager to please the Captain of his salvation, and who with this in view keeps first things first and makes no entangling alliances which may distract his thought and demand his

strength, who regards himself as having enlisted for life and as engaged in a glorious but absorbing campaign. He must regard himself as an athlete, ready to subject himself to sacrifice and discipline and to endure an agony of effort, but he may be encouraged as he remembers that he is striving not for a fading wreath of olive or of pine, but for a crown of glory and of life "that fadeth not away." Then, too, he is like a farmer who is engaged in monotonous toil. Unlike that of the soldier or the athlete, it has no glamour of peril or applause; and yet, no matter how obscure the task and how dreary the time, even though he "goes forth with weeping," he is certain at last to know the joy of harvest. He cannot fail of his reward.

The principle illustrated by the soldier, the athlete, and the farmer is one which Timothy will be sure to understand and which, as he thinks upon this message, will be made increasingly plain to him by the Lord, namely, that without a cross there can be no crown. Of this principle the Master himself is set forth as the supreme Exemplar, for we see in his case, as in no other, how truly suffering is succeeded by glory: "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David." Here Paul refers to the resurrection, not as a point of doctrine, but as an experience in the life of One who, though as a man, "of the seed of David," he suffered a shameful death, was raised in triumph and crowned with glory and honor.

This experience of Christ was a familiar feature of the gospel Paul proclaimed, and of the great principle of suffering issuing in blessing.

Of this same principle Paul mentions himself as a further example. His suffering has been due to his faithful preaching, and his recompense consists in the result of this ministry. "I suffer hardship unto bonds," writes the apostle; he is confined as a criminal; "but the word of God is not bound"; no opposition of man can limit the range or the glorious results of this gospel. It is the knowledge of these results which constitutes his reward. Paul is willing to endure the hardship and the shame, because thereby, in the providence of God, believers are being saved by faith in the Christ whom Paul proclaims, and, having been

chosen of God in time past, are being made heirs of eternal glory.

Thus countless followers of the great apostle have felt; they, too, have been willing to suffer and to weep and to die, because they have had "souls for their hire."

Paul brings to its climax his argument as to the sure reward of steadfast service by quoting a "saying" which, because of its rhythmic and balanced arrangement, seems to be a portion of an ancient hymn:

"If we died with him, we shall also live with him:
If we endure, we shall also reign with him:
If we shall deny him, he also will deny us:
If we are faithless, he abideth faithful;
For he cannot deny himself."

The first two lines place in striking contrast death and life, submission and sovereignty. Those who have suffered and died for Christ have shared his sufferings and death in all reality, and they will surely share his heavenly life and his glorious reign. The death to which Paul refers is not merely the act of self-dedication which unites us with Christ when we accept him as Lord and Master and seal our vows by baptism; rather, here the reference is to Christian martyrdom; for the whole passage is an encouragement not only to a spiritual experience, but to courage and endurance even to suffering and death in the service of Christ.

The third line contains a warning which is phrased in the very words of the Master. We are reminded of what he said to his disciples: "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Thus, this hymn declares, if we disown him in the face of peril or of scorn, he also will disown us in the presence of his Father on the day of his glorious return.

The fourth line breathes a note of hope; even though our faith may waver, and we may distrust the power and care of our Lord, he ever abides faithful; he cannot be untrue

to himself. Of course, if we abandon the faith, we face darkness and doom, but not every act of unfaithfulness is willful apostasy. The courage of Peter failed, but he was restored; even in advance his loving Master had prayed for him. Some honest doubts trouble even those who are devoted to Christ. He continues faithful, and while he is certain to disown those who finally are faithless, yet "he is faithful and righteous to forgive"; he is true to his promises and is certain to pardon, to strengthen and to reward. Thus across the long ages and the vast silences float the cadences of this sweet Christian song, calling us to be earnest, to be zealous, to be brave, and encouraging us to believe that without the cross there is no crown, and that "the way of the cross is the way of light."

III. Exhortations to Sound Doctrine. Ch. 2: 14 to 4: 8

A. THE EVIL INFLUENCE OF FALSE TEACHING. Ch. 2: 14-26

14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging *them* in the sight of the Lord, that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear. 15 Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth. 16 But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, 17 and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; 18 men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. 19 Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness. 20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work. 22 But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23 But foolish and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that they gender strifes. 24 And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, 25 in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will.

In the first half of this epistle, as commonly divided, Paul dwells more particularly upon the need of steadfastness in Christian service; in the second half, which begins with the fourteenth verse of the second chapter, his emphasis is more continually upon the need of sound doctrine. There is, however, a third theme in all three Pastoral Epistles. It is that of Church organization, and as in the

opening of this chapter, Paul has urged Timothy to appoint well-qualified and faithful men who may serve as the official teachers of the gospel, so here he exhorts him to put these officers in remembrance of the hardship involved in ministerial service, but also of its rich and abiding reward. Timothy further is most solemnly to charge these teachers "that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear." This is an injunction full of meaning to the Christians of all ages. There are many religious discussions which are profitless, in fact, injurious. Paul does not mean that words are of no value or significance. Sometimes a religious term is precious and must be guarded as a sacred trust, even as a casket containing a precious jewel of truth; but too frequently these discussions are for forms of words, for which men are contending in pride, in stubbornness, and in self-conceit. Too frequently these disputes result in loss of temper and even in the weakening of faith.

Timothy is urged to enforce his teachings by his own example; he is incited to eager effort that he may be approved of God as "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," that is, as one whose work will stand the test of divine judgment and be approved even when inspected by his Lord. The particular work in which Timothy is engaged is described as "handling aright the word of truth." The exact meaning of the original is a little difficult to determine. "Handling aright" is sometimes translated as "rightly dividing," and is supposed by some to refer to the act of a priest in dividing the flesh of a sacrifice, or to the work of cutting straight paths, or even to making a straight furrow; but whatever the original meaning of the term, when the word is connected with "the word of truth," it means the task of the teacher, who with loyalty and devotion is setting forth the true gospel of Christ. This is the task of Timothy. It is to be the supreme work of those officers whom he is to appoint to serve the Christian Church.

On the contrary, Paul indicates that there are already in the Church false teachers whom Timothy is to avoid. Their teachings are described as "profane babblings"; that is,

they are not merely worthless and empty; they are injurious and irreligious. The evil influence of these teachers, Paul declares, will become more powerful and more dangerous: "Their word will eat as doth a gangrene." This is a striking figure of speech which Paul employs. It suggests how the influence of false teaching eats its way into a life and character like a deadly cancer. The thought of this evil influence forms the very center of the paragraph which Paul is here writing. Two of the teachers whom he mentions as examples are Hymenæus and Philetus. The first has been named in his previous letter; of the latter nothing further is known other than the mention here, which gives him an immortality of shame, as he is listed among those who, while professing to follow Christ and boasting themselves to be teachers of his truth, are really so far corrupting his doctrine as to be sources of spiritual disease and death.

The particular truth in reference to which these men "have erred" is that of the resurrection. The exact nature of their false teaching is defined only as "saying that the resurrection is past already." It is probably parallel to the theories of those who, in modern days, regard resurrection as a mere figure of speech, denoting only the experience of those who "on stepping-stones" of their "dead selves" have risen to "higher things"; or of those who deny any future, bodily resurrection and consummation of glory at the return of Christ, and insist that, at the time of death, the souls of believers are clothed with "spiritual," "astral," or "immortal" bodies.

The serious influence of these errors may not be realized until one reads the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, in which Paul shows that a belief in a future resurrection of believers is inseparable from a belief in the resurrection of Christ, which Paul declares to be the very foundation stone of the Christian faith; and in this chapter he shows further the perilous results of abandoning these beliefs.

Thus Paul here declares that the effect of "saying that the resurrection is past already," is to "overthrow the faith of some."

Nevertheless, in spite of false teachers and of defections

from the faith, Paul tells Timothy not to be dismayed. The faith of some may be overthrown, but the Church cannot be overthrown. Paul describes the Church as a great house, the foundation of which is firm; in fact, he designates the Church by the very phrase, "the firm foundation of God," describing the whole by a part; and he declares that it is unshaken.

Upon this "firm foundation" Paul imagines two inscriptions, one written from the divine side and one from the human: "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness."

The first tells us that we need not be too much distressed by false teachers; we must not fear that they can destroy the Church; the Lord distinguishes between the false and the true; he will discover, he will punish and reward: "the Lord knoweth them that are his."

On the other hand, if we profess to be Christians, we must separate ourselves from all that is wrong and sinful either in belief or in practice. We must "depart from unrighteousness."

It is evident, then, that in the Church there are always false teachers as well as true. Paul pictures these two classes by comparing them with the different vessels or utensils which are found in a great house; some are put to distasteful and unpleasant uses, and others are vessels of honor, which are associated with dignity and delight. Thus some men in a professing church can be used only as warnings and as examples of the perils of apostasy; but, on the other hand, a man who will keep himself uncontaminated by false teachers and by error, will be like a vessel of gold or silver, "a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work." Nothing in the world is so pitiful and dishonorable as to be a teacher of error; and no person can be of such noble and continuous service in the Master's cause as one who is an intelligent and loyal exponent of his truth.

However, even the conscious possession of truth in the face of abounding error has its temptations, particularly

for a young man who has enjoyed such peculiar opportunities for learning as had Timothy under the tuition of Paul. Therefore, when the apostle here urges Timothy to "flee youthful lusts," we may conclude from what precedes and what follows that he refers not so much to bodily appetites as to the temptations of a young pastor to pride, to conceit, to dogmatism, to contentiousness, and to the display of his own wisdom, either in exploiting false theories or in defending the faith. Therefore Timothy is admonished to "follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

Furthermore, Timothy is warned against "foolish and ignorant questionings." There are many such. A mind which is well instructed and disciplined realizes that there are limitations to human knowledge and to divine revelation, and that it is foolish to argue about subjects which are merely matters of speculation, and also that the bitter discussion of less obscure themes can result only in stirring up strife.

"The Lord's servant must not strive," writes Paul. This is true of all Christians, but especially of the Christian minister. No man more rightfully may be expected to win confidence by his sweet reasonableness, or to disarm opposition by his gracious courtesy. He must be "gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing." Even when unbelieving and exasperating men oppose him, he must seek with all meekness to lead them back to the truth.

It is significant that Paul does not say that the men who oppose the truth are merely to be answered or to be convinced; they are to be brought to "repentance." Paul indicates, as did Christ, that there is a moral element in faith and unbelief. When the gospel has been clearly presented, when its message has been fully stated, then to turn from divine Love and Holiness and Light, is to convict oneself of having something evil in the heart or in the life.

So Paul here declares that the false teachers who have erred from the truth have really fallen under the power of the Enemy of their souls. They have been ensnared by the Evil One; they have been "taken captive by him unto his

will." It even is implied, further, that their unbelief itself has resulted in wrong living and that by an acceptance of the truth "they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." This deliverance, however, can be only by divine power. It is for the Christian messenger to present the truth clearly and kindly; but it is God who "may give them repentance"; he will honor his own truth, and he will give his faithful servant the joy of seeing souls delivered from powers of darkness and of death.

B. THE DIFFICULT DAYS AHEAD. Ch. 3

1 But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; 5 holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away. 6 For of these are they that creep into houses, and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, 7 ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 And even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith. 9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be evident unto all men, as theirs also came to be. 10 But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, 11 persecutions, sufferings; what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: and out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 Every scripture inspired of God *is* also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: 17 that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.

In urging Timothy to maintain sound doctrine, Paul has pointed out the evil influence of false teaching, and he now warns Timothy that opposition to the truth will continue and will grow even more intense; but Timothy is neither to be surprised nor dismayed. He is not to be surprised, because Christ and his apostles have made it clear that we live in an age of continual conflict between evil and good; he is not to be dismayed, because truth will

ultimately triumph and its enemies will be put to shame.

Here Paul seems to refer more especially to the close of the era in which we now live, "the last days" of the age between the ascension of Christ and his return. This return, contrary to the opinion of many, Paul does not regard as immediate or imminent; for in these Pastoral Epistles, Paul is making definite provision for the permanent organization and the continuing ministry of the Church. He does affirm, however, that in the period between the departure and the return of his Lord, "grievous times" must be expected. These times are to be grievous because of conditions not only in the world at large, but even in the Church. It is of the latter that he here is speaking. These times are to be difficult for those who would be faithful to Christ; they will be seasons of trial, in which the path of duty will not always be plain, nor the demands of duty easy to perform. In describing the men who are to make these "last days" so full of peril, Paul declares that the teachers of the present time are similar to them in character and conduct, and it is against such impostors that he is here warning Timothy. In short, the entire chapter might be summed up in two exhortations: the first, to "turn away" from such teachers as are here described; and the second, to abide in the truth which Timothy has been taught.

As he characterizes the men of the "last days," Paul employs a long series of striking terms. In these it may be difficult to find any special arrangement or division. However, they begin with two Greek words which are closely associated, "lovers of self" and "lovers of money," and they close with two words which are strikingly contrasted, "lovers of pleasure" and "lovers of God." Between these four words are five groups of three terms each, comprising an appalling list of evil characteristics.

The first group includes the term "boastful," that is, glorying in self and endeavoring to pass for a man of greater consequence than one really is; "haughty," that is, contemptuous of others; "railers," which denotes those who actually abuse and revile their fellow men. So these terms indicate sins against both truth and love.

In the second group of vices, "unfilial," "unthankful," "unholy," are terms which denote a wrong relation to parents, to benefactors, and to God himself.

The third group, "without natural affection, implacable, slanderers," stands in striking rebuke to the words of our Lord, "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you."

The fourth group, "without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good," describes the libertine, the churl, the worldling.

The last group, "traitors, headstrong, puffed up," describes those who are treacherous to their fellow men, reckless, and marked by self-conceit. The most distressing feature of all is found in the closing phrase of these descriptive terms, "holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof," which indicates that the men described belong to the professing Church. They affect piety, but they repudiate the power of Christian faith, keeping up a pretense of religion, but manifesting characters which show that they are utterly ignorant of that salvation which finds its essence in full surrender to a risen and glorified Christ.

As we read this direful description at the present time, we become painfully conscious that the apostle made no mistake in predicting that such men would be found during future days, even among the followers of Christ. Unhappily none of these men are strangers to us; we have met them all. Their forms are so familiar that they cause us no surprise. Most distressing of all, they are found in the Christian Church and their influence is such that we surely do well to be on our guard against them, and to heed the word of the apostle, "From these also turn away."

Paul indicates that the false teachers of his day were like in nature to the men he has just pictured; and he further characterizes them as those "that creep into houses, and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Exponents of religious error always find their easiest victims among a certain class of neurotic and sentimental

women, who love secret instruction and occult solutions of the problems of sin and of sorrow, especially such as are disturbed by guilt of conscience, such as allow their emotions to control their reason and to determine their morals, and such as are so flattered by being offered "new thought" that they are blind to revealed truth.

Paul finally compares the teachers of error, against whom Timothy was warned, with Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses when he was attempting to convince Pharaoh of the power of God, and to incline him to yield to the will of God. "So do these also withstand the truth," declares Paul, and he further describes them as "men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith," that is, men who are morally depraved and devoid of all real knowledge of the gospel. However, their defeat is certain, for as Moses discomfited those ancient impostors, so of these modern enemies of God Paul declares, "They shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be evident unto all men."

In absolute contrast with these false teachers, Timothy is given the inspiring example of Paul, and is reminded that he has, in the sacred Scriptures, a safeguard against all the influences of unsound doctrine.

The opposition of unscrupulous heretics is never easy to endure, but Timothy is reminded of Paul's sufferings and deliverance with which he has long been acquainted: "Thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, persecutions, sufferings"; he is able to recall how the faithful apostle had been driven out of Antioch and Iconium, and how he had been stoned at Lystra and left as dead; but also how the Lord had rescued him and had preserved him amidst all these perils.

Timothy is warned that he must expect similar experiences if he is to be loyal to the truth; suffering is the common experience of all faithful ministers of the gospel; Paul even adds, "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

Timothy need not expect times less difficult than those in which Paul has lived: "Evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." However, Timothy need not be swerved from the truth. He is exhorted to remain steadfast to the great religious verities which he has been taught, and he is encouraged to such fidelity by the remembrance of the mother and grandmother, by whom, during his childhood, he had been instructed in the sacred writings. He has further been taught the gospel message by his beloved teacher, Paul. The memory of those who have led him into the full knowledge of the truth should make it seem to him more and more sacred. Thus Paul reminds Timothy that "from a babe" he has known "the sacred writings" which pointed him to Christ, through faith in whom Timothy is saved. In the face of all false doctrine and in spite of the influence of false teachers of religion, Timothy need have no fear, for he is in possession of the sacred Scriptures which are designed to equip him for life and service. These Scriptures, Paul declares, are "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." They are designed, indeed, fully to equip the man of God for every good work.

In these last verses many readers prefer the translation of the Authorized Version for the phrase, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for . . . instruction," instead of the rendering of the Revision, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching," and they fear that the latter translation impairs the evidence for the inspiration of the Bible. However, while according to the former translation, inspiration is affirmed, according to the latter, it is assumed. Here Paul is discussing the value and the use of the sacred writings. Their inspiration is not called in question. He has been saying that Timothy, from childhood, has known these sacred writings which can make him "wise unto salvation." He then adds that every one of these writings, by which he means every part of these inspired Scriptures, is also profitable for such moral and spiritual discipline as will make the minister of the gospel completely furnished

for his difficult task. Parallel to the word "writings" is the word "scripture," and corresponding to the word "sacred" is the phrase "inspired of God"; and as in the former sentence, the sacred writings are said to be able to make one "wise unto salvation," so here they are declared to be profitable for "teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness."

The message is primarily for the "man of God," the Christian minister, but the Scriptures are likewise profitable for all the followers of Christ; and if Paul could make such statements in reference to the influence of the Old Testament, how much more gladly should we regard the possible influence of the sacred Scriptures which have come to us, not only from the ancient prophets but also from the apostles of our Lord.

C. PAUL'S APPROACHING DEATH. Ch. 4: 1-8

1 I charge *thee* in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. 5 But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. 6 For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: 8 henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.

Probably no passage in all the epistles of Paul contains so stirring an appeal as does this final charge to Timothy, his friend. It has all the seriousness of a last farewell, and it is made even more solemn by the phrases with which it is introduced, as the apostle charges Timothy "in the sight of God," and also "of Christ Jesus," of whose unseen presence both Paul and Timothy are conscious, to whom both must give account in the great day when he comes to "judge the living and the dead." At the time of that coming Timothy possibly may be living, but Paul realizes that he himself will then be among "the dead." By that glorious "appearing," and by the perfected "kingdom" which will follow, Paul adjures Timothy to heed this last command.

It is a twofold charge with which Paul completes this letter, and each part of it is enforced by the consideration of events which are to come. The first group of commands is found in the second verse of the chapter; it is summed up largely in the clause, "Preach the word," and it is related to the difficult times predicted in the chapter which precedes.

The second part of this final charge is found in the fifth verse. It reaches its climax in the command, "Fulfil thy ministry," and it is strengthened by definite mention of the approaching death of the apostle.

The first group of commands is especially related to the last half of the epistle, in which Paul has been urging Timothy to teach sound doctrine. Thus he here continues, "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

These five imperatives ring out with the directness of military commands. Their injunctions must be obeyed by every loyal minister of Christ in every age and land. The tense in which these words appear in their Greek original implies that these activities are to continue right up to the coming of the Lord.

"Preach the word," that is, "the word of God," the gospel of grace, the good news of his redeeming love, the truth recorded for us in the sacred Scriptures; this, and not human speculations, is the great message which every herald of the cross is commissioned to proclaim.

"Be urgent in season, out of season"; Paul does not mean that the messenger, in the urgency of his appeal, is to be inconsiderate and tactless, but he is not to consult merely his own convenience, not to preach at set times only, not to await occasions that are obviously opportune. At every possible season he must be eager to present the Word of life.

His purpose must be to "reprove, rebuke, exhort," but his spirit must be that of great forebearance and "longsuffering," and his method must be that of "teaching," which means that he will give grounds for correct belief and principles for right action.

Such teaching in accordance with "the word" is urged in view of the difficult days concerning which Paul previously has spoken, and to which he here again refers: "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables."

Thus the reasons why sound doctrine will not be tolerable are, that it will not satisfy the craving for novelty on the part of the hearers, or flatter their vanity, or condone their faults; therefore, they will welcome a host of teachers who will offer to meet their religious needs without insisting upon morality; consequently, they will refuse to listen to the presentation of truth, and will turn aside to fantastic fables. Those who willingly reject the realities of revealed religion, are always most apt to become the dupes of impostors and the victims of frauds.

In view of such coming days of peril, Timothy is urged to be alert and watchful; he must be ready to suffer hardship for the sake of the gospel, as Paul in the earlier part of the letter has warned him. First, he is to do "the work of an evangelist"; from the story of Philip who alone in the New Testament is called "the evangelist" we may conclude that the term did not imply a special order of the ministry, but a definite kind of work, particularly preaching to the unconverted; so that this exhortation is much like saying that Timothy and his fellow ministers are not to be satisfied with mere pastoral duties among members of their own flocks, but should continually be seeking for the salvation of other souls.

Last of all, Paul urges Timothy to "fulfil" his "ministry," that is, to accomplish completely his sacred task, to perform all its functions, to accept all its duties, to realize all its possibilities, to be faithful to all its demands.

Such is the last charge of the apostle and it is enforced by the solemn announcement of his approaching death. "This," says the apostle in effect, "is the special reason for your being faithful, namely, that I am laying down the work; I am leaving it to you, by whom it must be carried on and upon whose fidelity its success must depend."

"For I am already being offered," writes Paul, indicating that his blood is about to be poured out as a libation.

"The time of my departure is come;" here one is tempted to dwell upon the picture which the word "departure" often is supposed to paint: either the "loosing" of the

cords as a tent is taken down, or the 'loosing" of a ship from her moorings as she sails homeward over the sea; but in the time of Paul, this word seems to have been used with the mere meaning of a "going away." However, this is significant enough as we remember what this "departure" signified to Paul when he wrote to the Philippians of his "desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better."

To Paul death did not mean the cessation of consciousness, nor the sleep of the soul, but "to be absent from the body" was to be "at home with the Lord."

In familiar and vivid phrases Paul further impresses the fact that his earthly career is ended; and he refers to that career, not merely to express his rightful satisfaction, but to encourage Timothy to follow his worthy example. "I have fought the good fight"; here the figure of speech is drawn from the Greek games. Paul is saying,"I have fought through the glorious contest; my life has been a brave struggle, but I have never been daunted by opposition."

Or, if the meaning is somewhat more general, he is saying, "I have striven in the noble contest," and his next allusion is specifically to one stirring event in the games, namely, the foot race, as he declares, "I have finished the course." Paul surely had known what it was to "lay aside every weight" and " to run with patience the race" that was set before him. During all his long life of effort there had been no flagging because of weariness or faintness of heart.

"I have kept the faith"; he is here stating that he had received the gospel as a sacred deposit, he had guarded it with ceaseless care, and now he is entrusting it to Timothy who is thus encouraged not only to fight manfully and to run eagerly, but also, as the figure of speech changes to one which Paul had used earlier in the letter, to guard "that good thing which was committed" to him.

Then as Paul turns from the past to the future, he does so with the confidence of a conscious victor and with the assurance of one who knows he has merited a reward:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day." He had alluded to the Greek games in which the athletes contested for crowns of laurel or of pine. They were wont to strive for these corruptible crowns, but Paul was assured of one which would never fade away. It was a "crown of righteousness" by which many understand "a crown for being righteous," a crown as a reward for zeal and for fidelity.

It may mean, however, a crown which will consist of that perfect "righteousness" which Paul so earnestly had been striving to attain. This meaning would be in accord with the common New Testament usage, the "crown of thorns," the "crown of life," the "crown of rejoicing," the "crown of glory;" and the first meaning would leave this "crown" alone without any description as to its character.

It might be possible to combine these two ideas as is done by a quaint old commentator when he says, "It is called a crown of righteousness, because it will be a recompense of our services which God is not unrighteous to forget; and because our holiness and righteousness will then be perfected, and that will be our crown."

Paul mentions this crown, however, not in the spirit of selfish exultation; like all the preceding statements, this, too, contains encouragement for Timothy to live as Paul has lived, to serve as he has served, and to regard death as he regards it; for the apostle adds that this crown is not for himself alone, not only for great saints and apostles and martyrs, but also for "all them that have loved his appearing." This last phrase does not describe any one class of Christians or any single group who hold special views as to the return of Christ. Rather Paul indicates that to love the thought of the glorious appearing of our Lord is a natural characteristic of all Christians. His spiritual presence is to them a blessed reality, but his visible appearance in glory is their constant hope. Paul has reached a time when he knows that he must pass through the darkness of death; but he encourages his friends to believe that they might live until the Lord returns.

IV. Conclusion. Ch. 4:9-18

A. PERSONAL MATTERS. Ch. 4:9-18

9 Give diligence to come shortly unto me: 10 for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering. 12 But Tychicus I sent to Ephesus. 13 The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord will render to him according to his works: 15 of whom do thou also beware; for he greatly withstood our words. 16 At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. 17 But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

These closing sentences paint a picture in view of which the meaning and pathos and power of the whole epistle stand out in clearer light. They disclose the dank, dark, cheerless dungeon in which the letter has been composed. They reveal the great apostle, despised, deserted, yet undaunted even by the shadow of approaching death, and still sustained by his unconquerable faith.

They introduce characters whose familiar forms are so associated with heroic missionary efforts that their appearance enforces the great exhortations of the epistle to be steadfast in service and to be loyal to the truth. The names of the heroes who were among the closest companions of Paul and the mention of Thessalonica, Galatia, Ephesus, Troas, Corinth, and Miletus, places where much of his most notable work was done, open up great vistas of memory and make these closing words of his last letter almost a compendium of his life.

Then, further, these personal references are so definite and significant as to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that these Pastoral Epistles are authentic letters of the Apostle Paul.

First of all, he states the immediate occasion of this letter: it is his desire for the presence of Timothy: "Give diligence to come shortly unto me"; or, as he says a little later, "give diligence to come before winter." Paul was lonely. In the darkness of his dungeon he longed for companionship. No doubt he desired the help of Timothy, in his care for the churches and in the furtherance of the work which neither bonds nor imprisonment ever stopped; yet there need be no question that the tender heart of the great apostle yearned for sympathy and Christian fellowship. If some men can be happy without friends, surely Paul was not one of these. He was not merely a man of mighty intellect, but a man of deep affection and of tender emotions, and in the light of these closing sentences we realize that this last letter is a monument of his love.

He explains his loneliness and the urgency of his summons by telling Timothy of the dispersion of that circle of friends who for a time had cheered the darkness of his dungeon. One has deserted him; two have left him for reasons which he does not name; one has been sent by him to Ephesus. "Give diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica." Only once before in the life of Paul has Demas appeared. Then he was sharing an earlier imprisonment and he was described as a loyal fellow worker; in two epistles, then written, his name was honorably linked with that of "Luke, the beloved physician."

That Demas had become an apostate from the Christian faith, is by no means certain, although tradition so indicates. Probably he had become discouraged by hardships and had fled from Rome at a time when the persecution under Nero was becoming more perilous. It is enough of disgrace that he deserted Paul in the hour of direst need.

Paul next mentions the departure of "Crescens to Galatia" and of "Titus to Dalmatia." Whether they had been dis-

patched upon honorable missions, or had decided that it would be wise for them to labor in fields where their lives would be safer than in Rome, Paul does not state. It is not to be supposed, however, that he means to rank them with Demas as deserters. Of Crescens nothing else is known; but Titus is remembered as the faithful delegate who accomplished for Paul most delicate tasks in Corinth and in Crete.

"Only Luke is with me." It might be difficult to determine whether this phrase depicts more vividly the loneliness of Paul or the heroism of Luke. The apostle did have other friends in Rome whom later he mentions; but no one else was willing to share the rigor and peril of his imprisonment. However, there was no one whom Paul would have preferred to Luke. Probably no lovelier character lived in those days of early Christianity than this "beloved physician" whose gospel is regarded as "the most beautiful book in the world," whose book of The Acts constitutes the most fascinating and important portion of Church history, whose care for the great apostle seems to have made possible the continuance of Paul's incomparable work as they shared the perils of travel, the gloom of dungeons, and the glory of composing masterpieces of literary art. In this last scene of Paul's life nothing could be more fitting than this sketch of Luke, amid the deepening shadows, standing steadfast by his side.

To the name of Luke, Paul now adds that of another Evangelist: "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering." This name has become an inspiration to those of us who have known the bitterness of failure in the service of Christ. Here is a man whose early life had been marred by a grievous fault, whose companionship Paul consequently had spurned as that of a coward and a deserter, but a man who had so redeemed his reputation and so convinced the apostle of his sincerity, his devotion, and his worth, that he is now summoned to aid Paul in an hour of supreme danger, and in circumstances from which other friends were ready to flee.

One other member of the broken circle of fellow prisoners is mentioned: "Tychicus I sent to Ephesus." Tychicus

belonged to the province of Asia in which Ephesus was located; he had accompanied Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem; he had shared his earlier imprisonment in Rome, and from thence had carried the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. It is not impossible to conclude that he was to bear this letter, traveling by routes which had become familiar to him in the service of his famous friend.

The request of the apostle which follows, namely, that when coming, Timothy should bring with him the heavy "cloak" which had been left at Troas, and also the papyrus "books" and the leather "parchments," sounds a note of reality, for no forger would have inserted here such a request; it adds a tender touch of human interest and enables us to see the aged sufferer in the damp prison cell, shivering in the chill of an approaching winter; but it flashes a further light upon that indomitable spirit who, in circumstances of deepest distress, was eager to continue work with his manuscripts and books.

Whom Paul had in mind as he turned to warn Timothy against "Alexander the coppersmith," it is impossible to learn; nor can we conjecture the particular character of the offense which is denounced. Evidently this Alexander was an enemy of the gospel, and yet seemingly one who was disguised, for Timothy is put upon his guard against him. Of his ultimate defeat Paul has no doubt: "The Lord will render to him according to his works." The great apostle never entertained any doubts as to the sovereignty of the Lord, and of his final adjustment of penalties and rewards.

The apostle next describes for Timothy the experiences of his first public trial. He had defended himself before, in the presence of august courts and powerful rulers, but here at Rome he has been arraigned before an imperial tribunal at the very capital of the world, and at this time of peril and need he has been made to stand absolutely alone. Those upon whose support and aid he naturally might have relied, have forsaken him and fled. At that time even Luke may not have been in Rome. Why his

friends in the city furnished him no help we cannot conjecture. However, in this supreme crisis of his life, in his hour of greatest need, the apostle finds himself unbefriended, deserted, with no comrade or helper to sympathize, to comfort, or to sustain.

Yet he was not alone. By his side, unseen by the throng of curious spectators, unperceived by his malignant foes, unimagined by his imperial judges, there stood One as real to Paul as his very self: "The Lord stood by me." Nor was this Presence a mere inactive spirit; he manifested his power in two ways. First, he so strengthened Paul that the apostle gave a full and moving proclamation of the gospel of Christ, a message delivered before so representative an audience, and in the heart of the imperial city, that Paul could say truthfully, he had been strengthened so that "the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear." Instead of being intimidated and silenced as he stood before the judgment seat of Nero, Paul was enabled to give a message to the whole world.

There was a second result: "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." No special enemy is here denoted. Paul means merely that he was delivered out of his imminent peril; he was neither acquitted nor condemned, but death was for the present averted.

Such past deliverance gave him hope for the future, a hope expressed in words of far-reaching import: "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom." Paul does not believe that no physical ill can befall him, but he is confident that his enemies can inflict no abiding harm. His description of deliverance widens out to the statement of a sublime Christian confidence. Nothing can permanently injure one who belongs to Christ; even death will only deliver him from suffering and bring him into eternal bliss. No wonder that in the presence of such a Lord, Paul adds this doxology: "To whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

B. SALUTATION AND BENEDICTION. Ch. 4: 19-22

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus remained at Corinth: but Trophimus I left at Miletus sick. 21 Give diligence to come before winter. Eubulus saluteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

22 The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you.

Paul sends a closing salutation to Prisca (or Priscilla) and Aquila, and to, "the house of Onesiphorus." The latter Christian household has been mentioned by Paul with deep affection in an earlier part of his epistle; it is only natural that in dispatching the letter to Ephesus he should include this loving farewell.

As for Prisca and Aquila, they had been his fast friends since those days he lived with them in Corinth, days of discouragement and ultimate triumph when he was founding the Christian Church in that great commercial capital. It may have been then, under his influence, they first accepted Christ. They were Jews by birth and came from Pontus. More than once they had resided in Rome, where, as at Ephesus, they had been of great help to Paul. As at this time they again were in Ephesus, Paul gladly accepts the opportunity of sending them an affectionate remembrance.

From two other companions of the apostle, Timothy might have expected salutations, and therefore Paul explains: "Erastus remained at Corinth: but Trophimus I left at Miletus sick." It cannot be determined whether this Erastus is to be identified either with the treasurer of Corinth, Rom. 16: 23, or with the messenger sent by Paul to Macedonia, Acts 19: 22.

Trophimus was probably the Ephesian who had traveled with Paul on his third missionary journey. That Paul was compelled to leave him "at Miletus sick" would seem to indicate that even Christians cannot always claim by

faith deliverance from disease, and that even the chief apostle could not cure a suffering friend. In sickness and in health our prayer must be. "The will of the Lord be done."

After these personal greetings Paul again states the prime purpose of his epistle, which is to summon Timothy to Rome: "Give diligence to come before winter," that is, "before you may be prevented by storms, before I may be in greater need of the cloak you are to bring, before my next summons to stand before the judgment seat of Nero." It is a pathetic appeal, but its chief interest lies in the question which it naturally raises, namely, did Timothy reach Rome, in reply to this appeal, before Paul was condemned and executed? So it would seem; for otherwise Timothy might not have suffered the experience of imprisonment to which reference is made in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb. 13: 23. His visit to Paul may have been the occasion of his arrest. He probably shared with the apostle that captivity from which other friends shrank. Thus we may believe that during his last days Paul was solaced by the sympathetic presence of the two men he most truly loved, Luke and Timothy, and also by the faithful and efficient service of Mark.

There were other friends, too, who on occasion found access to his dungeon, residents of Rome and representatives of that large circle of Christians who held Paul in reverent regard. From them he sends greetings through Timothy: "Eubulus saluteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren." Of the persons here named nothing further is known, unless this Linus is he who, according to tradition, was appointed as bishop of Rome in the days of the early simplicity of that sacred office. The mention of his name and those of his associates gives another proof of historic reality to this letter; and the absence of all mention of the official position of Linus indicates that these words must have been written at the early date commonly assigned to this epistle. We are, therefore, still further assured that we are reading here the last authentic words of the Apostle Paul.

The closing benediction, "The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you," is an example of the wealth of meaning hidden from such readers of the English Bible as fail to understand its careful use of pronouns; for as "thy" is of course singular and denotes only one person, "you" is always plural, and here indicates the whole Christian congregation at Ephesus. Thus we are reminded again that these Pastoral Epistles were not mere personal letters to individuals but conveyed messages through representative ministers, to the Christians under their care.

For Timothy, Paul invokes the blessings of his ever-present Lord, and prays that divine grace may be granted to sustain and keep the whole congregation of believers. This grace supported Paul, as a little later he was led forth to die, and it surely will suffice for all who serve and trust his Master and his Lord.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS

Titus and Timothy were closely associated as companions and helpers of Paul. Both were trusted and loved by him and both proved worthy of his confidence and esteem. They seem, however, to have been men of strikingly contrasted character. Timothy was sensitive, affectionate, sympathetic, and gentle. Titus revealed more of energy, of vigor, of discretion, and of decision.

The life of Titus is not sketched for us by the historian Luke. In fact the name does not appear in The Acts. Yet the brief references made to Titus by Paul in his epistles are so significant that his personality and his career stand vividly before us; he was true to his great leader and rendered him valiant service, and in return he received through the pen of the apostle an immortality of fame.

He first appears, in the sacred story, at Antioch. He is described as a Gentile, a Greek, who had been converted to faith in Christ by the personal influence of Paul. Certain Jewish Christians were endeavoring to make him observe the law of Moses, and were insisting that such observance was necessary to salvation. It was in order to decide this very question which had arisen in reference to all Gentile converts that Paul, in company with Titus and other representatives of the church at Antioch, went to Jerusalem, as a delegate to the great council. Here, for a time, the battle raged about Titus; but the decision was finally reached which granted to Christians for all time freedom from the law as a ground of salvation. Thus the name of Titus is inseparably connected with the "Magna Charta" of Christian liberty; and it is further a reminder of the strange contrasts which the ages have produced, that while Jewish converts once questioned the possibility of salvation for Gentiles, now many Gentile Christians seem to question the possibility or the need of securing converts from among the Jews.

While Paul was on his Third Missionary Journey, during his long stay at Ephesus, Titus was his trusted lieutenant and messenger and served as his representative in dealing with a number of difficult matters, notably those in connection with the church at Corinth.

If the nature of tasks assigned is ever a compliment to the capacity of a worker, it was certainly such in the case of the missions which Titus was asked to accomplish for Paul.

The Corinthian Christians were divided by a spirit of faction; they were countenancing gross immorality; they were allowing irreverence in their public services; they were perplexed by false teaching. To correct such irregularities and, in addition, to collect a fund for the relief of the "saints" in Jerusalem, Titus was dispatched to Corinth by Paul on at least two occasions.

That he succeeded on such delicate and intricate missions is the highest possible tribute to his tact and courage and strength. The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians is full of expressions indicating the regard in which Titus was held by those Christians, his own sympathy and enthusiasm for them, as well as the gratitude and affection of Paul for Titus. The next and greatest tribute to the fidelity of Titus is this epistle which bears his name, and which he received from the great apostle while serving as his delegate and representative in the island of Crete.

This island, which occupied a favorable position in the center of the Mediterranean, had attained, in days of remote antiquity, a brilliant and glorious civilization; but, for some reason, this civilization had declined, and, in the time of Augustus, the inhabitants of Crete were crude and barbarous, and were regarded with aversion and contempt.

When Paul was on his way to Rome as a prisoner, the ill-fated ship on which he was sailing touched at a Cretan port, but later was driven from the island by a severe storm and subsequently wrecked. The voyagers were rescued, Paul was brought to Rome, but after an imprisonment of some two years, it seems that he was released, and resumed his missionary journeys.

He recognized the character of the Cretans, but believed that they should receive the gospel quite as well as the cultured residents of Athens and Rome. Taking Titus as his companion, he visited Crete. Quite possibly Christianity had been established on the island already, for Cretans were among the multitudes who had received the gospel from the lips of Peter on the day of Pentecost. Under the influence of Paul the Christian movement, if not actually begun, was fostered and strengthened. However, before the work of organization was complete, Paul was called to Greece and Macedonia. He therefore left behind him in Crete his trusted friend, Titus, to carry forward the work and to appoint officers in the churches throughout the island. Some time after his departure, Paul wrote back this letter to Titus, specifying the proper character of such church officials, urging Titus to rebuke false teachers, to exhort believers of all classes to lives of holiness consistent with their Christian profession, and to act firmly toward all who held and fostered heresies.

The letter served as a message of commendation for Zenas and Apollos by whom, possibly, it was conveyed to Titus. Its special message, however, was to the effect that on the arrival of Artemas or Tychicus, Titus should leave Crete and should join Paul at Nicopolis. Apparently, this reunion was enjoyed, for when, a little later, Paul was a second time imprisoned, he wrote to Timothy of the departure of "Titus to Dalmatia." We should not suppose that this was a desertion of Paul by Titus, but rather that he had gone to another mission field, and a field again of peculiar peril and difficulty. This, at least, is the last mention of that comrade who was so dear to the great apostle as to be called his "partner" and "fellow-worker," his "brother," his "true child."

This particular letter, written by Paul to Titus in Crete, is therefore a pastoral epistle, inasmuch as it is not merely a personal communication; it is an official note addressed to a representative of the apostle, and intended to convey through him a message to the whole church.

Like the other Pastoral Epistles, it has three great

themes: Church organization, sound doctrine, holy living. These three always have a definite logical relation, and they are here discussed in practically this order. The very purpose of Paul when leaving Titus in Crete was to complete the work of organization and to "appoint elders in every city." Elders are the only officers mentioned. They were evidently the spiritual rulers and leaders and teachers of the local congregations. Their chief task was "to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." Thus, here, as ever, Paul indicates that the supreme aim of Church government is the preservation of revealed truth.

This truth is here designated by a number of striking phrases, as "the message," the "faithful word," "the faith of God's elect," "the truth"; but the characteristic designation is that of "sound doctrine," or "healthful teaching." This word "sound" is really a medical term, and indicates doctrine which is free from all taint and disease. Evidently the Cretan church was already imperiled by unsound doctrine, by false teaching. This was due to the influence of certain errorists, particularly of Jewish origin, whom Paul designates as "gainsayers," "unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers," "factious" men who concerned themselves about "foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law." The influence of such men must be opposed by "sound" teaching, and at least five times in this brief letter Paul employs this significant term.

Furthermore, Paul gives to Titus, if quite incidentally, statements of the essential content of the truths which constitute "sound teaching." Twice in the course of the epistle, Paul introduces such summaries of the Christian faith.

One is in the second chapter: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Ch. 2. 11-13.

Another such summary of truth, likewise hardly surpassed for beauty and completeness, is found in the third

chapter: "But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Faithful is the saying, and concerning these things I desire that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

Paul speaks with no uncertain sound. To him the substance of the Christian revelation is definite, clear, unquestioned. The very fact that these statements are not part of a formal argument but spring from the general train of thought, in an epistle of practical instruction, makes them even more impressive as an expression of what to the mind of Paul constituted "sound doctrine."

However, "sound doctrine" is never regarded by the apostle as an end in itself. Truth, according to Paul, is always intended to determine life and to promote godliness. Therefore the supreme purpose of the epistle is to secure holy living.

If the organization is designated largely by the appointment of "elders," and if the truth is expressed in the phrase "sound teaching," the life to be developed is described quite as definitely by two phrases, "good works" and "sober-mindedness." The latter word, in several forms, appears likewise five times in the course of the letter. It is an extremely beautiful term. It denotes not sadness or gloominess of disposition but self-restraint, temperance, discretion, and general excellence of character as revealed in practical conduct. That believers of all ages and classes may be thus sober-minded, and that they may be "zealous of good works," is the supreme purpose of Paul in sending this letter to Titus.

The order of thought is not studied and formal, but its general course may be indicated by the following outline:

I. Salutation. Titus 1: 1-4.
II. Discussion. Chs. 1: 5 to 3 : 11.
A. Qualifications of Elders—In View of the Conditions in Crete. Ch. 1: 5-16
B. Conduct Among Christians—In View of the Saving Purpose of God. Ch. 2.
C. Conduct Toward Unbelievers—In View of the Saving Mercy of God. Ch. 3: 1-11
III. Conclusion. Ch. 3 : 12-15.

I. Salutation. Titus 1: 1-4

1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal; 3 but in his own seasons manifested his word in the message, wherewith I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour; 4 to Titus, my true child after a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour.

In reference to the Pastoral Epistles of Paul it has been said truly that "these letters supply the practical test of inspiration, namely, their field of matter for thought is never exhausted by study." This is evident when examining even the brief clauses which constitute the personal salutations which open these epistles. They are found to be not mere empty formulas; they contain statements of important facts worthy of most careful consideration.

Each of these salutations differs from the others, and commonly contains phrases carefully chosen in reference to the occasion and purpose of the particular letter, so that the opening greeting constitutes an appropriate introduction to the epistle.

Paul does not explain his personal circumstances, nor those of the readers he addresses. It appears from further statements in the letter that he is on a missionary journey which has included a stay on the great island of Crete, and which has since taken him to Greece and Macedonia. As there is no place for such a journey in the story of his life as recorded by Luke in The Acts, it appears that he must have been released from the imprisonment with which The Acts closes and have enjoyed a season of active ministry before the confinement at Rome where he wrote his last letter to Timothy. The place of this letter, in order of time, therefore, is between the First and the Second Epistles to Timothy.

Paul designates himself as "a servant of God," literally, a "bondservant," or "slave." This exact expression Paul uses in no other place. He usually says that he is a "servant of Jesus Christ." It is only a slight change, but certainly a change which no forger would have made, had he desired to write a letter in the name of the great apostle. It is one of the many proofs that we have here a genuine letter of which Paul was the author, and it sounds out this assurance in the first sentence of the epistle.

Paul further declares himself to be "an apostle of Jesus Christ"; for his service of God is being rendered in the sphere of his Christian apostleship. This apostleship is said to be "according to the faith of God's elect," that is, with a view to the establishment and confirmation of the faith of the people whom God has chosen, by which latter term Paul commonly defines the Church.

This apostleship, further, is declared to be for the purpose of extending and enforcing "the truth which is according to godliness." This "truth" is none other than the Christian gospel which has as its aim the promotion of godliness, and which is sought and accepted by those who truly love and serve God.

This apostleship is exercised and this faith and knowledge are experienced "in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal." Christian faith and knowledge have therefore a superb accompaniment of hope, which reaches back to the eternal promise of a God who cannot be false to his own word, and forward to the enjoyment of the eternal life which he has provided through Jesus Christ.

This gracious purpose and promise God has manifested "in his own seasons," in the gospel, "his word," even in the "message," or "proclamation," intrusted to Paul, "according to the commandment of God."

After thus defining his apostleship, Paul expresses his greeting to Titus, whom he calls "my true child after a common faith." The expression may mean that Titus had been led to accept the Christian faith by the influence of Paul; it may further indicate the comparative youth of

Titus; but it is surely an expression of tender affection, of close spiritual relationship, and of deep sympathy. For Titus, Paul invokes, "Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour." Just previously Paul has used the beautiful phrase, "God our Saviour," so that "Christ Jesus our Saviour" is united with the Father in the oneness of divine being as well as of saving grace.

It will be noted, then, that in at least two particulars this "salutation" to Titus forms a fitting introduction to this particular epistle. First, it emphasizes the authority of Paul, as one who is a "servant of God," "an apostle of Christ," and entrusted with a divine message "according to the commandment of God." This emphasis indicates that Paul is not merely writing a personal letter to his friend Titus, but also is sending an official communication to him as one in charge of the congregation in Crete, so that this is in the truest sense one of the Pastoral Epistles. This emphasis is even stronger than in the introduction to First or Second Timothy, possibly because Paul was less well known to the Christians of Crete than to those of Ephesus. In any event, his words, which reached them through Titus, would be received with the respect and consideration due to a divinely appointed apostle of Christ.

In the second place, such a greeting is an appropriate introduction to the epistle because it describes the gospel message in terms fitting the situation in Crete. The truth is declared to be "according to godliness"; it was unlike the heresies of the false teachers which were purely speculative and without practical aim or moral purpose. Further, in contrast to the deceitfulness of the Cretans and the faithlessness of those who were advocating error, the hope of eternal life was promised by "God, who cannot lie."

Thus, as through the entire letter, official authority in the church is declared to have as its purpose the preservation and proclamation of the revealed truth contained in the gospel, and, further, "sound doctrine" is ever intended to secure holy living; its supreme purpose is the promotion of godliness.

II. Discussion. Chs. 1 : 5 to 3 : 11

A. Qualifications of Elders—in View of the Conditions in Crete. Ch. 1: 5-16

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge; 6 if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly. 7 For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward; not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; 8 but given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled; 9 holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers.

10 For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. 12 One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said,

Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons.

13 This testimony is true. For which cause reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. 15 To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Such a passage impresses the most casual reader with the fact that Church organization is a matter of vital importance. There may be wide differences of opinion as to its exact form or as to the details in its system of government, but it is obviously quite in accordance with the divine will that properly qualified men should be selected for the spiritual oversight of the congregations of believers and for their instruction in revealed truth.

Thus when Paul had secured a large number of converts

in all the cities of Crete, but had been called away before the task of consolidating his work was complete, he left behind him his trusted companion Titus, to gather the believers into churches and to effect an organization by securing for each of these congregations a board of "elders," or "presbyters," as Paul declares in this letter which he writes back to Titus: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge."

With great care Paul then prescribes the exact qualifications which these officers must possess. We may take for granted that those who were to be selected for such important positions would be men of some manifest abilities and talents, and men who had some inclination as well as capacity for the work. It will be remembered also that in the third chapter of First Timothy rather similar qualifications are detailed for the "bishop," a word which Paul here uses, v. 7, as equivalent to "elder" and as defining the same office.

The functions of the office seem to have been those of ruling and teaching, and evidently the qualifications for the office are those which may rightly be expected in the case of the modern "pastor" or "minister."

He must be "blameless," not merely of good reputation in general, but having no habit or characteristic upon which one could lay hold to bring him into disrepute. He must be "above reproach."

He must be "the husband of one wife," literally, "a man of one woman," by which Paul probably means a "faithful husband." Several other interpretations have been placed upon these words, particularly that of having been "only once married"; but as Paul allowed and encouraged second marriages, it is improbable that he should regard this as disqualifying one from serving as an "elder." It is possible that the term excluded one who had married while a divorced wife was still living. The requirement seems to be that the elder should be absolutely above suspicion in his marriage relations.

His family life should also be commendable; he should have "children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly." If an officer should have unbelieving children, it might indicate that he was either careless as a Christian, or a recent convert; and if his children were insubordinate, it might indicate that the "elder" lacked the ability to rule the "household of God," the congregation of believers.

Thus an "elder," as an overseer of the church, or as Paul here describes him, a "bishop," must be "blameless" as a "steward" in the house of God; not "self-willed," self-satisfied, or arrogant; "not soon angry," irascible, of passionate temper; "no brawler," or one "given over to wine"; "no striker," a prohibition more necessary in that earlier age, but men in every age have been tempted to be violent, and one of such a disposition should not be chosen as an "elder"; "not greedy of filthy lucre," which forbids not merely avarice, but any tendency to gain wealth by disgraceful means. On the other hand, an "elder" must be "given to hospitality," a grace even more needed in the early Church, or in mission lands, than in the present day or in Christian countries. He must be a "lover of good"—not merely of "good men" but of "good" in its widest sense, even of "goodness" itself; "sober-minded," or characterized by complete self-mastery; "just," or righteous in his dealings toward men; "holy," or "saintly," in his relations toward God; "self-controlled," or able to refrain from all that may be unlawful.

The true "elder" must also be a guardian of the faith. He must hold fast the sacred tradition, according to the gospel as taught by the apostles, and he must be thus qualified because of his twofold duty as a teacher, first, to encourage and instruct believers, "to exhort in the sound doctrine," and, second, "to convict the gainsayers," that is, to withstand unbelieving opponents, to reply to them successfully, to "convict" them of fault.

Such a firm grasp of revealed truth was a necessary requirement for one who was to meet the caviling heretics in Crete, and it is equally necessary to-day for those who would encourage believers and defend the gospel which it is the privilege of the Church to guard.

That "elders" of such high moral attainments and such firm grasp of the faith were particularly needed in view of the conditions in Crete, Paul proceeds to demonstrate by a description both of the general character of the Cretans and of the special nature of the false teachers.

As to the latter, he declares that they are "many" in number, that they are "unruly," or insubordinate, as members of the professing Church, "vain talkers," devoted to fanciful and foolish conceits, and this particularly in the case of those who came from among the Jews and were mistaken champions of the law.

These rebellious babblers must be put to silence, not only by answering their heresies, but also by open rebuke, inasmuch as they "overthrow whole houses," that is, they destroy the faith of entire families, by "teaching things which they ought not." While professing a zeal for the ceremonial law and for holiness, the real motive of these Judaizers was their desire for dishonest and disgraceful gain; their false teaching was really "for filthy lucre's sake."

The peril was the greater because of the character of Cretans in general. Paul has had them in mind before, for when he mentioned the Jewish teachers, he specified them as only the most troublesome of the heretics. Cretans at large were of the very character already indicated. To prove his charge, Paul quotes from one of their own number, Epimenides, a reputed prophet who flourished about six hundred years before Christ: "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons."

This quotation brings to mind the famous syllogistic puzzle: Epimenides said that the Cretans were liars; but Epimenides was a Cretan; therefore Epimenides was a liar; therefore the Cretans were not liars." The fact is, however, that on this one occasion, at least, Epimenides told the truth, when he accused his countrymen of being false, fierce, and sensual. So notorious was their insincerity that "to play the Cretan" was understood to mean "to lie" or "to deceive." Then as to their ferocity, the poet is said to have stated sarcastically that "the absence of wild beasts from Crete was supplied by its human inhabitants."

As to gluttony, the words in the English translation

hardly convey the meaning of the original Greek, which pictures persons so intemperate in their gratification of appetite as to bear in their persons evidence of their shame.

To this severe indictment of Cretan character, Paul gives his assent: "This testimony is true"—a serious statement to make in a letter which was to be read by Cretans and to be given a place among the books of the Bible. Such a confirmation from the pen of the apostle indicates that in his day there could have been little question as to the debased moral character of the inhabitants of Crete.

It is to the glory of Christianity that in soil so unpromising it produced the flower and fruit of faith and holiness. However, it is not surprising that even within a church composed of Cretan converts and surrounded by an atmosphere of such moral laxity, there appeared teachers, particularly from among the Jewish element, who taught a false asceticism, who insisted that the essence of religion consisted in refraining from certain kinds of food, in performing certain prescribed rites and ceremonies, and who thereby made shipwreck of real faith and ended in moral disaster.

Because the peril of Cretan Christians was so great, Paul insisted that these false teachers should be dealt with the more severely. "For which cause reprove them sharply," writes the apostle, meaning not merely that their arguments are to be answered and their fallacies corrected, but that the teachers are to be rebuked as deceivers and as self-deceived. Nevertheless, the rebuke, however severe, is to be administered like all church discipline, with a view to the reform of the offender, "that they may be sound in the faith," At least, Titus is to make it plain that the false teachers are corrupting the truths of the gospel and are "giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men." These "fables" are the idle, foolish, speculations, which Paul previously, in these Pastoral Letters, has rebuked severely; and the "commandments" are evidently the rules of ascetic living, the arbitrary prohibitions, upon which the false teachers are insisting; and they are condemned, not merely because they are of

human origin and without divine sanction, but because those by whom they are being enforced are "men who turn away from the truth"; they are not real believers.

As to these ceremonial forms and requirements, Paul declares that "to the pure all things are pure." He is probably quoting a maxim which the corrupt teachers perverted to mean that one who was ceremonially clean, and who observed the ritual which to his mind constituted religion, need not be troubled about "insignificant" matters of common morality.

Paul uses the phrase in a very different sense. He repeats the teaching of our Master, that if the heart is pure then one cannot be made unclean by contact with food or other objects which men arbitrarily have declared to be "unclean." Mere rites and ceremonies, aside from faith and purity, are meaningless.

On the other hand, it is true, as Paul continues to remark, that "to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure," that is to say, those whose hearts are impure defile everything with which they come into contact, and even lawful things become, in their case, "unclean." Thus the principle here stated is not merely that found in Rom. 14:14, namely, that a thing is wrong for him who so regards it; nor does it mean "Evil be to him who evil thinks" (not "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," "Shamed be he who thinks evil of it"). The statement here is even more serious. It does not teach that a mistaken judgment makes a thing wrong, but that in the case of those who are inwardly "defiled," and who are "unbelieving," and therefore are refusing the truth which alone can cleanse the heart, all their deeds and even the natural uses of food and drink are tainted with evil because of the polluting fountain within, because, as Paul further intimates, "both their mind and their conscience are defiled." Their mental processes are perverted by impure associations, and their conscience, for the same cause, has no power to discern between right and wrong.

However, when Paul states that "their mind and their conscience are defiled," he does not formally give it as a

reason why, to them, external things are impure; rather, he adds this phrase to describe further the false teachers, by stating that their corruption extends to both their mental and moral powers, so as to taint with evil both their judgments and their deeds.

The description ends with an indictment which applies with greater force to the false teachers who were Jewish: "They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him." They were proud of their religious privilege; their great boast was that they knew the one, true God; their very ceremonies and ritual they traced to his original commands; however, by their conduct they actually belied any such knowledge of God; they were "abominable," detestable, and "disobedient," and so far as the accomplishment of any good thing was concerned, they were utterly unfit, useless, "reprobate," that is, of "no account," of no possible use.

The exact forms of false teaching and of consequent moral laxity which threatened the church in Crete may not exist to-day; but formalism is not dead, and when men imagine that the essence of religion consists in external rites or is promoted by "vain" discussions of subtle theories, then morality is always in peril and there is an even more insistent need for securing, as "elders," or "presbyters," or "bishops," or pastors, men who will proclaim and defend the "sound doctrine" of the Christian gospel. It was for this very purpose that Paul had left Titus in Crete.

B. CONDUCT AMONG CHRISTIANS—IN VIEW OF THE SAVING PURPOSE OF GOD. Ch. 2

1 But speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine: 2 that aged men be temperate, grave, sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience: 3 that aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; 4 that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 *to be* sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed: 6 the younger men likewise exhort to be sober-minded: 7 in all things showing thyself an ensample of good works; in thy doctrine *showing* uncorruptness, gravity, 8 sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us. 9 *Exhort* servants to be in subjection to their own masters, *and* to be well-pleasing *to them* in all things; not gainsaying; 10 not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. 11 For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; 13 looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

The Epistle to Titus brings the Pastoral Epistles to their logical climax; for, while all treat of Church government, of sound doctrine, and of consistent living, in Titus the greatest proportionate stress is laid upon the last of these three; and is it not true that Church government is designed to safeguard doctrine, and that doctrine finds its fruitage in deeds? Therefore, in this epistle, when Paul has instructed Titus to complete the organization of the church by appointing elders in every city, and when he has

insisted that this is in order to put to silence the teachers of false doctrines whose influence is defiling the life of the believers, he urges Titus not only to teach sound doctrine, but also to bring it to bear upon all classes of Christians and upon every condition of life: "But speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine," that is, in contrast with the false teachers, who concerned themselves with "vain" discussions of foolish fables and questions as to things clean and unclean. Titus is to give practical instruction as to moral conduct which is consistent with the gospel and indeed is inspired by its truths.

This conduct is to be enjoined upon old and young, upon men and women, upon slaves as well as free men. He is to teach "that aged men be temperate, grave, sober-minded." The last of these three qualities is one which is again and again enjoined by Paul. According to Plato it was one of the four cardinal virtues. It denoted control of the bodily appetites, but as used in the New Testament, it implies complete self-mastery, a control of mind and of thought as well as of the body. It is enjoined upon old and young, upon "elders" and upon young women as well, and it is so often repeated in this chapter as to form almost a keynote to its moral precepts.

Aged men are to be also "sound in faith, in love, in patience." These virtues should be possessed by all Christians, but in an eminent degree they should be manifested by men of advancing years. The exercise of faith and love and patience should for such men be natural and normal and habitual, as Paul seems to indicate by his use of the term "sound" or healthy.

It is expected also "that aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good." The teaching here mentioned is not in the nature of public, but of private, instruction. It was to be given more particularly to the young married women. They were to be trained "to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands." There can be no doubt that Paul believed that the husband is and ought to be "the head of the wife";

but he showed that the relation must be that of perfect love, recognizing a complete spiritual equality. It is these very teachings of the apostle which have resulted in the increasing emancipation of women. However, he sanctioned no violent revolution in social and domestic life, lest the very principles which he advocated might be misunderstood, "that the word of God" the gospel, be not "blasphemed."

It is significant that Paul relegates to the "aged women," and not to Titus, the task of instructing the young matrons of the Church. The comparative youth of Titus made this expedient, but was, on the other hand, the very reason why he was specially qualified to teach "the younger men ... to be sober-minded"; for he by his own conduct could influence them aright. Therefore Paul urges upon Titus, as upon every Christian minister, to show himself "an ensample of good works," especially in his teaching, showing such sincerity, gravity, soundness of speech, that the opponents of Christianity might be discomfited by being able to find no evil to report.

Even slaves were so to live as to reflect credit upon their Christian profession. Their condition under existing Roman laws and customs was degraded and distressful beyond all conception, The teachings of Paul and his fellow believers, as received from their Master, were to abolish, in time, the very institution of slavery; but the apostle advocates no violent revolution; he neither forbids slaves nor encourages slaves to demand freedom. On the contrary, slaves are advised "to be in subjection to their own masters, and to be well-pleasing to them in all things; not gainsaying [contradicting]; not purloining [pilfering, appropriating goods to their own use], but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

That slaves, in the age of Augustus, might be an ornament to a system of divine truth, must have been a startling statement, but it was the very glory of the gospel that it could transform such degraded beings into obedient, honest, chaste, sober men and women. It was possible for slaves so to live that they would reflect honor upon "the doctrine of God" who provided so wonderful a salvation.

It was to the gospel, indeed, that such transformations of life and character were to be attributed; it was also upon its truths that such moral instructions were founded. Truth is in order to goodness, but goodness is not independent of truth; creed affects character, but character cannot be produced without belief; doctrine is not more important than conduct, but conduct is conditioned upon faith. It is for this reason that Paul bases all the exhortations of the chapter upon a summary of gospel truth which for beauty and depth and significance is possibly unsurpassed.

This summary includes the two great focal points of the faith, namely, the First and the Second Coming of Christ. In his First Coming, as the Redeemer of mankind, that is in his incarnation and atonement, Paul declares, "The grace of God" has "appeared bringing salvation to all men." Because this salvation has been provided for all, therefore all who have accepted this gracious gift, whether young or old, bond or free, should live the lives of holiness and godliness which Paul has described.

Indeed, the very purpose of God in manifesting this grace was that we believers might be trained, or schooled, or instructed, "to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world." Thus the saving purpose of God is stated negatively and positively; negatively, that we should renounce or repudiate "ungodliness" or irreligion, and "worldly lusts," i. e., the sinful desires which have no relation to a higher realm and belong to a world estranged from God; and, positively, that "we should live soberly," exercising complete mastery over ourselves; "righteously," in our relations toward our fellow men; "and godly," i. e., with true reverence and love toward him who has granted us so great a salvation. We are to live so "in this present world," that is, in an "age" the spirit of which is not sober or righteous or godly, because, as a result of our Christian "teaching," we are "looking" also for a visible manifestation, "for the . . . appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." This "appearing" is to be realized in the return of Christ.

as he himself declared that when he came again it would be, not in humiliation, but in the glory of his Father, as well as in his own heavenly glory.

Thus, we are constrained to such a life of penitence, of virtue, and of hope, by the redeeming purpose of Christ "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." That is, the very purpose of Christ in dying for us was to purchase our freedom from the slavery of sin and "purify unto himself a people," that is, to purify and so make them fit to be his people, his own people, "a people for his own possession." This last phrase recalls the equivalent words of the promise made to Israel on condition of their obedience to God: "Ye shall be mine own possession," Ex. 19: 5. Further, it was the redeeming purpose of Christ not only to deliver from lawlessness, but also to have as his own a people "zealous of good works"; for Christian experience is not a mere negative deliverance from evil; it is a positive and active and willing and eager performance of good. Redemption secures sanctification, and results in service.

These great truths of the Christian faith Paul exhorts Titus to teach; they form the essence of "sound doctrine," and their solemn sanction and high inspiration is to be brought to bear upon all the duties and experiences of life.

"These things speak," writes the apostle, but he adds, "and exhort"—for the truths were to be made to bear upon the conscience and to result in right conduct; "and reprove"— for in cases of waywardness and fault, Titus must admonish and rebuke the offenders.

Lastly, these exhortations and reproofs were to be characterized by a tone of authority, so that none might regard lightly the ambassador of Christ. He must speak with the authority which comes from a knowledge of the divine will and of the saving purpose of God.

C. CONDUCT TOWARD UNBELIEVERS—IN VIEW OF THE SAVING MERCIES OF GOD. Ch. 3: 1-11

1 Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work, 2 to speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men. 3 For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, 5 not by works *done* in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 that, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 Faithful is the saying, and concerning these things I desire that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men: 9 but shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. 10 A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; 11 knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned.

Paul here reminds Titus that it is his duty, and the duty of the Christian pastors in Crete, as they apply truth to life, to insist upon right conduct toward those outside the Church—first toward their Roman rulers, but then, more widely, to maintain friendly relations with all who are not Christians. "Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work." It has been suggested that the Cretans were naturally turbulent and troublesome and insubordinate, and that, as such, those among them who professed faith in Christ were specially in need of such admonitions. Is it too much to say, however, that the need is not confined to natives of that island or to men of that day? We seem

to live in an age peculiarly marked by lawlessness and a disregard of authority. It is at such a time the duty and the privilege of Christians, by their obedience to civil magistrates and their loyalty to established government, to commend to the world the gospel they profess. Of course, there are limits to such obedience. When authorities demand that which is morally wrong, it is necessary to "obey God rather than men." As a rule, however, the purpose of civil officers is to restrain evil and to encourage good.

Possibly this thought furnishes the transition to the wider reach of the exhortation for Christians to maintain right relations with unbelieving neighbors: "To speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle," or sweetly reasonable, "showing all meekness toward all men."

To manifest such conduct toward unbelievers is the less difficult when we remember that we were once like them in character and would be like them to-day were it not for the unmerited mercy of God. "For we also once were foolish," that is, without the understanding of spiritual things, "disobedient, deceived" or deluded, "serving divers lusts and pleasures," i.e., slaves to all manner of passions and indulgences, "living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another."

This is indeed a dark and pitiful picture of the Christless world, but those of us who know the depths of our own hearts can say, "But for the grace of God such, too, were we."

In reminding Titus of this divine grace, Paul gives another supremely beautiful summary of Christian truth. He begins by describing this grace as "the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man," at once indicating that we should therefore be inclined to show such kindness and love to our fellow men, v. 2, and at the same time sharply contrasting this goodness of God with human malice and hatred, v. 3.

This grace "appeared," as shown in the previous chapter, in the coming and the redeeming work of Christ, by which salvation was made possible. Of that salvation which was

thus brought to all men, we have been made recipients "not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves," not by any merits of our own, "but according to his mercy he saved us." Nothing is said here of the faith and obedience on our part, which are necessary to salvation; these are assumed, as taught in other parts of Scripture. The design of the apostle here is to fix the thought upon the unmerited favor of God to which our salvation must ultimately be attributed.

As to the means by which this salvation is communicated, Paul states that it is "through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." If, as usually believed, Paul refers to baptism as "the bath of the new birth," he does so with the understanding that it was no mere external rite, but a real sacrament in which inward faith and grace properly accompanied outward form. It is, however, not upon subjective conditions, but upon the works of God that Paul centers our thought, and he adds that the "washing" secures not only a "new birth" but also a moral "renewal" by the power of the Holy Spirit which God "poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." The pouring out of the Holy Spirit is uniformly attributed in the New Testament to Jesus Christ, and in virtue of his redeeming work and his exaltation. Thus in imparting to us salvation, all the Persons of the divine Godhead are concerned, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

This saving grace of God has been granted us "that, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life," for it was the purpose of God not only to deliver us from the bondage of sin and to grant us spiritual renewal but also to make us partakers of his eternal glory, so that now we are not only justified by his grace but are also heirs of God and certain to realize the hope of life eternal.

As to this majestic summary of revealed truth, Paul remarks, "Faithful is the saying," using a phrase which is employed four other times in these Pastoral Epistles to describe what are commonly regarded as formulas of Christian faith, I Tim. 1: 15; 3: 1; 4: 9; II Tim. 2: 11.

The statements of the great essentials of belief which he has been making are thus declared to be absolutely trustworthy, so that Titus can affirm them "confidently," and with the purpose of showing that real faith in God is not a matter of theory or speculation but of practice. True belief will manifest itself in life, and to that end the proclamation of Christian truth should ever be directed. Thus Titus is urged to proclaim these great verities of saving grace "to the end that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works."

Such an enforcement of practical religion is "good and profitable unto men." On the other hand, the "foolish questionings" with which the false teachers in Crete concern themselves, their allegories based upon "genealogies," their "strifes" and their "fightings" about the law, are "unprofitable and vain;" Titus, therefore, is not even to investigate them, but is to "shun" them utterly as useless, and as utterly powerless in the matter of producing higher life, nobler character, and purer conduct.

Any person who, because of his concern in these vain conceits, causes division in the Church, any such "factious man," Paul continues, "after a first and second admonition," calling attention to the injury and folly of such separations between Christians, "refuse," avoid, have nothing more to do with him, since you may rest assured that he is "perverted," and when a man has "a mental twist" and is unwilling to be taught, it is a waste of time and strength to argue with him; such a man, who is bent on fomenting discord, is acting contrary to reason and conscience; he "sinneth," and in dividing the Church because of his boasted new knowledge, and in repudiating his former beliefs, he is following a course by which he is "self-condemned."

The last phrase may possibly mean "conscious of guilt;" but in either case, the sentence calls to mind one of the most serious problems which confront the Christian pastor of the present day, namely, as to how to deal with a "factious" man, one who causes trouble in the church because of his peculiar beliefs. On the one hand, he is not to be accused lightly of insincerity, nor to be hastily excom-

municated; on the other hand, he is not to be treated with such apparent approval as to strengthen his position. He should be solemnly warned and admonished, but the time may come when further argument is useless and fellowship impossible. Differences of belief, in the body of professing Christians, create situations which require the exercise of both charity and courage. Undoubtedly the Church must administer such discipline as is necessary to guard against corrupt teaching, yet every act must be inspired by love. All suspicion and misinterpretation and intolerance and bigotry must be avoided, and only such a course pursued as seems certain to reflect credit and honor upon the name of Christ.

III. Conclusion. Ch. 3: 12-15

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, give diligence to come unto me to Nicopolis: for there I have determined to winter. 13 Set forward Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. 14 And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

15 All that are with me salute thee. Salute them that love us in faith.

Grace be with you all.

The concluding verses of the epistle are brief and personal. First of all is the summons to Titus to make all possible haste to meet Paul at Nicopolis. Which city of that name is meant, it is not possible to affirm, but probably it was the place of that name in Epirus. There Paul had "determined to winter," and he desired the help and companionship of his faithful friend, Titus. The latter, however, was not to leave until either Artemas or Tychicus arrived to continue the work in Crete, where Titus was not acting as a bishop or permanent officer of the church, but evidently in a temporary capacity as a delegate of the apostle.

As to Artemas, we have no further knowledge; but as Tychicus was sent a little later to Ephesus, II Tim. 4:12, it is possible that the former was finally chosen to act for the time as chief pastor in Crete.

In the second place, Paul commends two traveling missionaries who are on their way to Crete and who possibly were the bearers of this letter to Titus. These were "Zenas the lawyer and Apollos." As to the former we know nothing more, not even whether he was an expert in Roman law or a "scribe" instructed in the law of Moses.

With Apollos we are rather familiar from the reference in First Corinthians and The Acts. He was the eloquent and learned Alexandrian whom Priscilla and Aquila in-

structed when in Ephesus, and whom a special party of Christians later claimed as their leader in the church at Corinth. These two friends Titus is urged to "set forward . . . on their journey diligently," which would seem to mean not only that they were to be greeted cordially and to be shown generous hospitality, but also that they were to be provided possibly with companions and even with funds, for "nothing" was to be "wanting unto them." By similar kindness, at least similar in its generous provision, the messengers of Christ should be "set forward" to-day "that nothing be wanting unto them."

In the third place, Titus is to urge the Christians in Crete, whom Paul calls "our people," to "learn to maintain good works for necessary uses." Possibly this is in connection with the help of Zenas and Apollos. The selfish Cretans might plead too great poverty to have a part in aiding missionaries. They are to be trained, therefore, to engage in honest occupations, both for their own support and in order that they may be able to have a substantial part in Christian enterprises and thus to be "not unfruitful."

The mention of these names, some so familiar in the writings of Paul and some so new, indicate that we have here the work of no forger but an authentic letter from the hand of the great apostle.

The instruction to the Christians of Crete, together with the plural form of the benediction which follows the closing salutations, indicates that the message of this letter was intended not merely for Titus, but also for all pastors, and indeed through them for all the flock of Christ in all ages and lands. For them, too, is the benediction and the prayer: "Grace be with you all."